

THE CHURCHMAN

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THE CHURCHMAN

Editor :

THE REV. PHILIP E. HUGHES, M.A., B.D., D.Litt.

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Editorial

THE 350th anniversary of the Authorized Version of the English Bible has not been allowed to pass unnoticed. Far from it, for the publicity accorded this milestone has already, during the first half of the year, been remarkable; and in particular the occasion has been made doubly significant by the appearance of the first instalment (the New Testament) of an entirely new translation of Holy Scripture—to be called *The New English Bible*. A vast amount has been, and continues to be, said and written both in praise and in criticism of this new version. It receives the attention of more than one of the contributors to this present issue. Until God raises up another William Tyndale it would seem to be vain to expect to see a rendering of the Bible which rivals the Authorized Version, and we are tempted to suggest that the committee which was responsible for the production of the Authorized Version showed, unlike the general run of committees, uncommon good sense (to put it no higher) in retaining for the most part the prose of this one man who, under God, wrote such matchless English. To give the Word of God to the people in the idiom of one's own day is indeed a commendable aim, and it is not our intention to add here to the volume of discussion concerning the merits or demerits of *The New English Bible*; but we do wish to express gratitude to the Archbishop-Designate of York, to Bishop Stephen Neill, to the Rev. J. B. Phillips, and to Professor G. W. H. Lampe for co-operating to make this an issue worthy of this year of commemoration. We acknowledge, too, our indebtedness to the Editor of *The Times* for kindly giving permission for the reprinting from the special *Times Supplement on the Bible in English* of March 27th of Dr. Coggan's essay which appeared under the heading "A Guiding Influence for over Three Centuries" (constituting the first part of his article in this issue). This stands in the place of an article which Canon A. W. Parsons had promised to contribute, but which, though commenced, had not been completed at the time of his lamented death in December. We pay tribute to this servant of Christ, who was so widely known and loved, and whose writing was always distinguished by clarity, fairness, and a charitable spirit.

Whatever our assessment of the new translation of the New Testament, we can be thankful to God that its publication has been a matter of such widespread interest that many thousands of copies have already been sold, with the result that multitudes are reading it and talking about it. Christians should pray that this renewal of interest in the Scriptures may lead to a revival of true religion, a genuine return to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and a new reformation in our day.

It is worthy of record that at a distinguished gathering, assembled in the Stationers' Hall in the City of London on February 16th for the purpose of celebrating the 350th anniversary of the publication of the Authorized Version of the Bible, tributes to the English Bible were paid by the three chief leaders of our nation. Her Majesty the Queen, in a message specially sent to the meeting, said that the translation of the

Bible into English "came like a broadening beam of light to our forefathers, giving them the right and the power to search out for themselves the saving truths of the Christian Religion". The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Fisher), who presided, declared that "the life of the Church rests on the linked faith of individual Christians; and their faith is bound to get astray and twisted unless it is fed and nourished on the Bible". And the Prime Minister, Mr. Macmillan, in his address, said: "In this age, when our moral standards never seem quite to match our material progress, the Bible provides something, especially precious—a unique heritage, beyond all price—at once a consolation and an inspiration."

* * * *

A clear symptom of the spiritual sickness into which we, as church and nation, have lapsed is the neglect and even contempt of the Catechism which is found on all sides. The drafting of a Revised Catechism has been watched with both hope and misgiving. Dr. Packer's article is a trenchant appraisal of the draft revision and a firm reminder that there are proper limits to the matter that should be included in any catechism. It will be an important day for the Church of England when its instructors realize once again the great value of the Catechism—and of the catechetical method of instructing the young. The following words from a letter written by John Calvin in October, 1548 to the Duke of Somerset, who was then Lord Protector of England, are well worth heeding afresh today: "Let me assure you, Sir, that the Church of God will never survive without a catechism, for it is like seed which ensures that the good grain does not perish but multiplies itself from age to age. Moreover, if you wish to build an edifice of long duration, and which will not fall quickly into a state of decay, see to it that the children are instructed in a good catechism which shows them briefly, and according to their tender age, wherein true Christianity lies".

Today, when family prayers and Christian instruction in the home are treated as outdated if not comic idiosyncrasies of the Victorian era, a double onus falls upon the Church, which by force of circumstances is challenged to act *in loco parentium* if the children in our parishes are to be made aware of the Christian message and its significance for life. Ideally, of course, a child should grow up within the two concentric covenant spheres of the Christian home and the Christian Church. It is within this framework alone that the baptism of infants is defensible and can be of genuine significance to the developing and maturing child, to the Christian community, and to the neutral neighbourhood. The prevailing practice of indiscriminate baptism is a scandal, not only to those outside the Church but also to those within—and to the recipients of the sacrament if they come from pagan homes. We have said before in these columns, and we repeat, that the Church should abandon this reprehensible custom, and should not delay to take steps to ensure that the present scandal is removed by insistence that the sacrament of baptism is administered only to children at least one of whose parents is a regular worshipper, and who thus have some reasonable expectation of growing up within the environment of God's

covenant of grace. For the rest, the Church must hopefully put the more normal process into reverse: that is to say, it must plan to reach the parents through the children. It must gather in the children from their pagan surroundings, and instruct and catechize them with diligence. It must develop a catechumenate of the unbaptized young, preparing them for baptism upon profession of faith when they are at an age to answer responsibly for themselves.

The catechism, then, should have a twofold aspect: retrospective for those who, as the children of practising Christians, look back to their baptism; and prospective for those who, as the children of non-worshippers, look forward to their baptism. Meanwhile the parents of the latter should be encouraged to take their place in the worshipping community, and themselves to come under instruction in a catechumenate for those of adult years.

P.E.H.

The Bible in English : A Survey

BY DONALD COGGAN

THIRTEEN hundred years is a long time in the growth of a nation. But it is impossible to speak about the influence of the English Bible on the life and character, the literature and thought of the English people without going back at least that far. True, the outlines of history are dim and the facts not easily verifiable when one is dealing with the seventh century A.D. ; but it seems probable that there is truth in the story that just about 1,300 years ago a labourer at the monastery of Whitby, who later became a monk there, turned much of the Scriptures into verse as a result of a vision vouchsafed to him. So Caedmon became the first Anglo-Saxon writer of popular religious poetry, though it is likely that even before his time there were paraphrases from the Latin scriptures into the vernacular. A country like Britain, which could as early as 314 send three of its own bishops to the Council of Arles, presumably had considerable parts of the Scriptures in its own common language.

Perhaps the best way of surveying what is a very long stretch of history and a vast subject will be to focus the light of our inquiry on certain people and on incidents of particular interest. To put it another way, we shall flash on the screen of our mind a short series of pictures that will illustrate our theme.

The first we have already glanced at—Caedmon who, so the old story goes, felt keenly his inability to sing and, when he saw the harp coming his way at the monastery at Whitby, would leave the table. But one night when he had done so, and had lain down in the stable and there fallen asleep, there stood One by him in a dream, and said, “Caedmon sing Me something.” And he answered, “I cannot sing, and for that reason I have left the feast.” But He said, “Sing the beginning of created things.” So he sang; and the poem of Caedmon is the first native growth of English literature.

Our second picture comes again from the north of England. This time it is Jarrow and the date is 735. The Venerable Bede tells us that he spent all his years in the Jarrow monastery, “ever intent upon the study of the Scriptures. In the intervals between the duties enjoined by the disciplinary rule and the daily care of chanting in the church, I took sweet pleasure in always learning, teaching, or writing”. Now it is Ascension Day, 735, and Bede is on his death bed. Let his faithful disciple Cuthbert tell us the story of the finishing of the translation of St. John’s Gospel. “In the evening his boy-scribe said to him : ‘One sentence, dear master, is left unfinished’. He bade him write quickly. Soon the boy announced that it was finished. ‘True’, the dying man said, ‘it is finished. Take mine head between thy hands and raise me. Full fain would I sit with my face to my holy oratory, where I was ever wont to pray, that sitting so I may call on my Father’. And so he sat on the floor of his cell, and chanted ‘Glory be to the Father and to the

Son and to the Holy Ghost'. And as he breathed the words 'the Ghost', he died." So the good work of the translation of Scripture into a language that the common people could understand went on.

Centuries pass, and we go for our third picture to Lutterworth in Leicestershire, the scene of the work and ministry of John Wyclif. Some forty-four years after his death in 1384, the Pope ordered the Bishop of Lincoln "to proceed in person to the place where John Wyclif was buried, cause his body and bones to be exhumed, cast far from ecclesiastical burial and publicly burnt, and his ashes to be so disposed of that no trace of him shall be seen again."

The offence, for which this dire penalty was prescribed, was that Wyclif had unlocked the Bible to the common English reader. "Thus," wrote the old historian Thomas Fuller, "this brook"—he is referring to the river Swift—"hath conveyed his ashes into Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." The claim is scarcely exaggerated. It is indeed a fact that only part of the Wyclif Bible is actually the work of John Wyclif himself—Nicholas Hereford at Oxford translated much of the Old Testament. But the impetus was Wyclif's, and the whole work appeared two years before his death. It was, as G. M. Trevelyan has said, "an admirable and scholarly piece of work, a great event in the history of the English language as well as religion". Wyclif was a man before his time, one of those:

deathless minds which leave when they have past
A path of light.

Indeed, the light was needed, for it was a day when many of the clergy could not construe or expound the Lord's Prayer, nor the creed or the ten commandments. The plight of the laity must have been dire; and it is deeply significant that the copies of the Wyclif Bible still extant are small, unadorned, and closely written, indicating that they were meant not for the mighty and the wealthy but the man in the street.

In the year 1477, Caxton set up his press under the shadow of Westminster Abbey. What a weapon this was to be for the dissemination of literature and in particular of the English Bible! No longer would it be necessary laboriously to copy out each gospel or epistle by hand. Wyclif's Bible of the previous century, or Tyndale's of the ensuing one, would be rolled off in their hundreds and thousands of copies by this stupendous invention.

Before we come to Tyndale we ought to glance at Oxford around the year 1500. There we see a young man just back from Italy, full of the heady knowledge of the Renaissance. The ancient classics had come alive for him. But it is not on these that he is lecturing. It is on the Epistles of St. Paul. His lecture room is crowded to the doors. John Colet, close friend of Erasmus and of Sir Thomas More, is bringing these old letters to life in a way that Oxford had never known before. The great doctrines are seen to be not the relics of an age gone by nor the property of the schoolmen only, but the word of God for every man who has ears to hear them. The expository skill of Colet at Oxford, of Erasmus at Cambridge and of many who lit their lamps from the fire

of their learning—this, married to the technical skill of Caxton and his successors, put the Bible unfettered into the hands of the English people.

* * * *

For our next picture we turn to William Tyndale, whose life and work (and, it should be added, his martyr-death) are of inestimable importance in the story of the English Bible. It has been reckoned that ninety per cent of Tyndale's translation stands unaltered in the Authorized Version of 1611. No wonder that Professor Greenslade can call him "the man who more than Shakespeare even or Bunyan has moulded and enriched our language". This man, driven by a great passion to "cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scripture" than did many of the clergy of the day, had an uncanny gift of lifting the common language, in a true nobility of homeliness, up to the sublime level of the Bible. When, as we read the pages of the Authorized Version, we find ourselves moved by such a phrase as "until the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts"; or "in Him we live and move and have our being"; or "for here we have no continuing city but we seek one to come", we are, whether we realize it or not, indebted to William Tyndale. Driven out by persecution from London, Tyndale did his greatest work on the Continent, whence copies of his translation were smuggled out, some in bales of cotton and some by other surreptitious means into this country. In 1536 he was martyred by strangulation and burning. His last prayer was "Lord, open the King of England's eyes". Little did he dream that that prayer was to be answered in the very next year by the royal recognition of the Coverdale Bible, which itself was enormously indebted to Tyndale's.

We pass by Coverdale's work, with only a glance of thankfulness for that lovely version of the Psalms that is enshrined as a monument to him in our Prayer Book, and with, perhaps, a touch of regret that such a rendering as "There is no more triacle at Galaad" (Jeremiah viii. 22) never found its way into the Authorized Version. And so we come, for our last picture, to 1611. Or, rather, to 1604, for it was in that year the year after the death of Queen Elizabeth I, that at the Hampton Court Conference, with the full approval and encouragement of King James I, a new translation was decided on. The King James Version (or, as it is known to us, though less accurately, the Authorized Version) is the final answer to those who maintain that no good thing can come out of the deliberations of a committee.

This version was the result of the work of a committee, itself divided into six sub-committees, two sitting at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge. The members were the cream of the scholarship of the day. It was said, for example, of Bishop Launcelot Andrewes, who headed the Westminster group, that "he might have been interpreter general at Babel . . . the world wanted learning to know how learned he was". But the committee was marked not only by culture and learning—it was marked also by humility and piety. In the "Preface of the Translators", the members wrote, rather delightfully: "We never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new

Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against: that hath been our endeavour, that our mark."

It is easy to look back from the vantage point of the passage of 350 years and to detect errors in scholarship that the researches of later years have brought to light. We know much more today about the Hebrew language and about Greek manuscripts than did Launcelot Andrewes and his colleagues. But I think that Macaulay was right when he described the 1611 version as "a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power"

It was a matter of extreme good fortune that the King James Version came into being just when it did, for this was the period when our language reached what G. M. Trevelyan has called "its brief perfection". It was the age of Shakespeare and Marlowe, of Spenser, Hooker, and Bacon. There is a kind of monosyllabic simplicity and yet majesty about much of the language. Consider this: "Thus will I bless Thee while I live : I will lift up my hands in Thy name". Or : "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost". Or again : "The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land". For sheer beauty, it would be hard to improve on sentences such as these. It was this kind of English that fixed the standard for centuries to come.

It was hard to improve—impossible perhaps—on the language of the Bible and the Prayer Book and of Shakespeare. There had been a steady progress and enrichment from Chaucer to Elizabeth, and the peak point was reached in the early years of the seventeenth century. Even today, three and a half centuries later, our common speech is vastly enriched by the cadences and proverbs of this version. Very often those who use such phrases as "the skin of my teeth", "heap coals of fire on his head", "the fat of the land", "the salt of the earth", "the powers that be", "the pearl of great price", "hip and thigh", do not realize to what an extent they are indebted to this most formative of all translations.

* * * *

I have spoken of the influence of the Bible on our English speech. But as a matter of fact, it had an influence far deeper on our character, on our religion, and on our social history. In a famous sentence, J. R. Green wrote of the time of Queen Elizabeth I : "England became the people of a book and that book was the Bible". G. M. Trevelyan, who perhaps better than any other living Englishman has described our social history, says that "when Elizabeth came to the throne, the Bible and Prayer Book formed the intellectual and spiritual foundation of a new social order". For every Englishman who had read Sidney or Spenser, or had seen Shakespeare acted at the Globe, there were hundreds who had read or heard the Bible with close attention as the Word of God. The effect of the continual domestic study of the book upon the national character, imagination, and intelligence for nearly

three centuries to come, was greater than that of any literary movement in our annals, or any religious movement since the coming of St. Augustine. That is a stupendous claim, but it is one that can be amply justified. Let us look at two illustrations.

Some sixty to seventy years after the 1611 version appeared, a tinker in Bedford was writing prose of extraordinary power. His education had been very slight, his reading limited mainly to the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and Fox's Book of Martyrs. John Bunyan's most famous book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, opens like this: "I dreamed and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a Book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the book and read therein: and as he read, he wept and trembled: and not being able longer to contain, he broke out with a lamentable cry, saying 'What shall I do?'" "A Book in his hand"—that was true not only of John Bunyan but of tens of thousands of his fellow-countrymen. The days were long past when they had to be dependent on the mystery plays for a knowledge of drama of Biblical events, or on strolling preachers such as the lollards, or on a visit to the local church to read from a Bible chained to the lectern. The Bible was available to practically every man and available in lucid English. "A man, with a book in his hand," from which he learnt the secret of forgiveness and of life—this was an apt description of multitudes from the early decades of the seventeenth century on.

My second illustration is drawn from an engraving. The scene of Edward Prentis's "Evening Prayer" is set in a middle-class home of about 1850. The table has been cleared except for a vase of flowers. His glasses are on, and he is reading to the family, including a small child and an old lady with her work-basket beside her. Near the door sit the maid and a working man. There is no question what the book is. It is the Bible which in this way, by daily reading and pondering, became a powerful influence in tens of thousands of homes. A nation's character was largely moulded not only by what was heard in church, but by what was read and reverently listened to at home.

I have tried to indicate something of the power the English Bible has exercised on the life and character, the language and literature of our people. It is small wonder, against that background, that when at the Coronation Service the Archbishop of Canterbury presents a Bible to the sovereign he says: "Most gracious King, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom, this is the royal law; these are the lively oracles of God."

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* * * *

In that excellent book *The Bible in its Ancient and English Versions* (edited by H. Wheeler Robinson, Oxford University Press, 1940) there are two chapters by J. Isaacs. The second of these is entitled "The Authorized Version and After". It includes some samples from

translations which appeared in the eighteenth century—and there was something of a glut of them. As we read these samples, we can only express admiration and gratitude for the restraint, the dignity, and the musical poetry which characterize the King James Version. Consider this as a rendering of James ii. 3 : “ If you should respectfully say to the suit of fine cloths, sit you there, that’s for quality ” ; or this for a rendering of James ii. 5, 6 : “ The tongue is but a small part of the body, yet how grand are its pretensions ! a spark of fire ! what quantities of timber will it blow into a flame ? the tongue is a brand that sets the world in a combustion : it is but one of the numerous organs of the body, yet it can blast whole assemblies : tipp’d with infernal sulphur it sets the whole train of life in a blaze.” (Both of these are from a rendering by Mace in 1729.)

Or consider this from America—had Benjamin Franklin got his tongue in his cheek when he gave this rendering of Job i. 6-11 ? “ And it being *levee* day in heaven, all God’s nobility came to court to present themselves before him ; and Satan also appeared in the circle, as one of the ministry. And God said to Satan : You have been a long time absent ; where were you ? And Satan answered : I have been at my country seat, and in different places visiting my friends. And God said : Well, what think you of Lord Job ? You see he is my best friend, a perfectly honest man, full of respect for me, and avoiding every thing that might offend me. And Satan answered ; does your Majesty imagine that his (Job’s) good conduct is the effect of mere personal attachment and affection ? Have you not protected him, and heaped your benefits upon him, till he is grown enormously rich. Try him ; only withdraw your favor, turn him out of his places, and withhold his pensions, and you will find him in the opposition.”

Or contrast the simplicity of The Song of Solomon ii. 12 in the Authorized Version (“ The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ”) with this effort by the Quaker Anthony Purver in 1764 : “ Earth’s Lap displays her infant Flowers, the warbling Spring is welcomed in, and hark how the Turtle-dove cooes in our Clime.” No comment is needed.

We can be thankful that it was the King James Version which gripped the imagination of the English people from 1611 onwards, and not the highly coloured efforts of later generations.

* * * *

But the Editor has asked me to write on *modern* versions of the Bible. If we restrict ourselves to the twentieth century alone we have a rich field in which to work. James Moffatt, of course, was something of a pioneer. We may get tired of his rendering of the divine name by “ The Eternal ” ; we may be provoked by his rearrangements of the text with an arbitrariness which most later translators have eschewed ; we may get a hearty laugh from his rendering of Job. iii. 3 : “ Perish the day I was born, the night that said, ‘ It is a boy ’ ! ” ; we may shrink from calling the ark a barge ; we may squirm at the indignity of “ We only know bit by bit, and we only prophesy bit by bit ” (1 Corinthians xiii. 9). But we cannot be other than grateful for a brave piece of pioneering work—a certain blazing of the trail for others to follow.

Many of us, too, are grateful for that reverent and quietly scholarly rendering by Dr. Weymouth which lit up parts of the New Testament for us when first we were tasting its joys. Since those days, we have had such a feast of renderings that it is easy to forget the joy with which we welcomed the earlier attempts at "Englishing the Bible", as Knox called it.

And what an achievement was *his* ! Those who have read that sad book *Ronald Knox* by Evelyn Waugh, will have felt that his translation of the Bible did much to redeem the failure to use his brilliant gifts for which the Roman Catholic Church must be held responsible. A one-man translation of the Bible, including the Apocrypha, with an extra version of the Psalms thrown in for good measure—this is a stupendous achievement. There is a resounding power and dignity to much of this translation which befits a man who, from his earliest years, knew how to handle language.

J. B. Phillips' *Letters to Young Churches* made a tremendous impact on the English-speaking world, and whetted our appetite for further courses to follow : *The Young Church in Action*, *The Gospels*, and *The Book of Revelation*. If the element of paraphrase mingles somewhat freely with translation in these books, we can only be thankful for a rendering which has opened up the New Testament to millions of readers and made it contemporary in a way never known to them before. It is said that Phillips' rendering is even more popular in America than it is here—and that is saying a good deal, for the sales since the day that C. S. Lewis first commended *Letters to Young Churches* in 1947 must have been enormous.

It was something of an event when Dr. E. V. Rieu's translation of the Four Gospels, with its excellent introduction, was published as one of the *Penguin Classics* series of which Dr. Rieu is the editor. Now it has been followed by *The Acts* translated by his son. "A wise son maketh a glad father."

The Revised Standard Version is a fine piece of work, but it is a revision of a revision, not a fresh translation. As the opening words of the preface to that book have it, "the Revised Standard Version of the Bible is an authorized revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which was a revision of the King James Version, published in 1611". It has been, and is, widely read in homes and churches in this country—a handsome contribution from America to British readers of the Bible. I believe it will have served to wean some of our people from too blind an adherence to the Authorized Version and to prepare them to listen sympathetically to that new version, the first part of which has come to us only a few months ago.

I have only touched on some of the renderings which have come to us in recent decades. Before I turn to the *New English Bible*, I should like to mention three books where the story of modern versions of the English Bible is told fully and well. The first of these is *The Translations of the Bible* by E. H. Robertson (S.C.M. Press, 1959), one of the series : "Studies in Ministry, and Worship". The second is *The English Bible : A History of Translation from the Earliest English Versions to the New English Bible* by F. F. Bruce, Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis in the University of Manchester

(Lutterworth Press, 1961). The third is *The Bible in the Making* by Geddes MacGregor, Professor of Philosophical Theology in the University of Southern California (John Murray, 1961). This book covers much more ground than either of the former two, but has some interesting chapters on modern English versions.

* * * *

Now, at last, has come the long awaited *New English Bible : New Testament*, the first instalment of a work which is to include the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. As is now well known, this is a completely new translation, by a group of scholars under the directorship of the Reverend Professor C. H. Dodd, representing all the main strands of English Church life (apart from the Roman Catholic), and incorporating the most recent discoveries of New Testament scholarship and based on the best available texts. The time is ripe for such a new translation, in a way that it was not ripe when the Revised Version was put out. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the discovery of the ostraca and papyri, which were to throw so much light on the nature of New Testament Greek and on the meaning of many of its most important words, was yet future. Now all these discoveries can be incorporated in the new version.

The result of all this new information, together with the use of language and idiom such as is normally used in our own day, is to give us a version whose colours are almost startlingly bright. A Bradford business man compared the effect of the reading of this new version to the withdrawal of a piece of gauze from the face of a picture—the colours and lines seemed so much clearer. Much, he said to me, of what was obscure now stood out plain. I suspect that many of the ethical passages of the Pauline Epistles will make much more uncomfortable reading than they do in the Authorized Version !

The layout of this version helps in this process of clarification. The headings of large sections are useful. The titles given to some Epistles are illuminating—thus I John is “Recall to Fundamentals”, I Peter is “The Calling of a Christian”, I Timothy is “Church Order”, and James is “Practical Religion”. Moreover, the paragraphing helps in the clarifying of argument; and the fact that the verses are only indicated by small figures in the margins means that the reader can run on uninterrupted. (The *Pericope Adulterae* is removed from its usual place in the Fourth Gospel and printed on a separate page at the end of that book.)

So much has been written already on this new version that perhaps the most interesting course will be to take, almost at random, certain verses and to comment on the contribution which their new rendering makes to the understanding of them.

The Beatitudes become a series of exclamations, thus probably reflecting their Semitic original: “How blest are those who hunger . . . who show mercy . . . whose hearts are pure . . .”.

The price of sparrows (Luke xii. 6) has risen from “five for two farthings” (Authorized Version) to “five for two pence”—not, presumably, because of a rise in the cost of living but because of a

change in the use of the language of currency as between 1611 and 1961 !

The Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 13) now does not "gather all together" (Authorized Version) prior to setting off for the far country. No; he turns "the whole of his share into cash", the translation reflecting a particular usage of *synago* which the papyri have disclosed.

No longer do the bystanders say to Peter at the Passion, "Surely thou art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee" (Matt. xxvi. 73). They say: "Surely you are another of them; your accent gives you away!"—which is just about what they would have said!

Philip is concerned (John vii. 7) not lest two hundred pennyworth of bread would be insufficient to feed the multitude, but "twenty pounds" (footnote—*literally* 200 denarii). "This is an hard saying" (John vi. 60) becomes "This is more than we can stomach", and "Doth this offend you?" (in the next verse) becomes "Does this shock you?" (Incidentally, a study of the various ways in which *skandalizo* is rendered would be an interesting comment on the fact that the translators felt perfectly free to render the same Greek word in a variety of ways, in order to catch the particular *nuance* of a particular context.)

The typically Semitic parallelism of the sayings of Jesus is recaptured in the great utterance of John vii. 37, 38 (how pleased C. F. Burney would have been!): "If anyone is thirsty let him come to me; whoever believes in me, let him drink."

The difficult verse, John viii. 25 becomes, "Why should I speak to you at all?" with the footnote variant, "What I have told you all along".

There are what our American friends call "preaching values" in some of the footnotes—as, for example, in this footnote to John xv. 11, "I have spoken thus to you, so that I may have joy in you and your joy may be complete."

Turning for two or three examples from the Epistles, we note with pleasure the omission of the comma after "saints" in Eph. iv. 12, Authorized Version—"the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry . . .". This becomes, "to equip God's people for work in his service . . .".

The obscure "she shall be saved in childbearing" (I Timothy ii. 15) becomes, "she will be saved through motherhood", with two variants at the foot of the page: "saved through the Birth of the Child" and "brought safely through childbirth".

Parakletos in I John ii. 1 becomes "one to plead our cause" (footnote "advocate"), while in the Fourth Gospel it is rendered "Advocate".

Let me put two questions in no spirit of carping criticism: Is the word *truckle* sufficiently familiar in ordinary parlance to be used in such a passage as Mark xii. 14: "Master, you are an honest man, we know, and *truckle* to no man . . ."? In John ii. 4 and xix. 26, "Woman" becomes "Mother" in our Lord's words of address. This may be a concession to the impossibility of translating *gyne* satisfactorily, but may there not be some significance in the fact that

there is no reference in the Gospels to our Lord calling the Virgin Mary "Mother"? If there is, it is obscured by this translation.

When a major work of revision of some venerable document has been done, it is the easiest thing in the world to go through it with a tooth-comb and point out many passages which we could have rendered far better than the revisers have done! This is an age of revision—Bible, Catechism, Church Psalter, all are in process of taking on a new look. That is all to the good. It may well be an indication of the work of the Spirit in the Church—that Spirit whose task it is to "prod" into spiritual and intellectual activity the members of the Body of Christ. But when such a work as this revised New Testament appears, we should ask such questions as these: Is this a work in which the results of the scholarship of recent decades are well and truly incorporated? Is this a work which effectively strips away those things which dim the truth of God? Is this a version which makes it easy for the average Englishman in the mid-twentieth century to hear what the word of God is saying to him? Is this a rendering which, while indicating the difference in style between St. Mark's roughness and *Hebrews'* polish, gives the message with a dignity befitting its content? Is this version likely to wear well? The present writer would give to all these questions a resounding affirmative answer, and that is high praise.

Perhaps a final word may be allowed. The work of translating the Old Testament and the Apocrypha goes on—now more rapidly than formerly because the New Testament is out of the way and so the English panel can give its undivided attention to the work which comes through to them from these two panels. The work is beset by great difficulties. It is incumbent on the Church over the coming years to pray continually for the members of the panels concerned. "O send forth Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead them."

The Problems of Making a Contemporary Translation

BY J. B. PHILLIPS

THE problems of making a contemporary translation are not, I think, what they appear. The proper translation of the New Testament is not, and never has been, merely a matter of substituting an English word for a Greek word, and the most rigid verbal inspirationalist would be among the first to complain if such a "literal" version were produced. Anyone who has access to a Greek/English interlinear New Testament can plainly see what I mean. This is the sort of result you would get from even the simplest passage, for example, Luke xv. 8-10:

"Or what woman drachmas having ten if she lose drachma one not lights a lamp and sweeps the house and seeks carefully until she finds and finding calls together the friends and neighbours saying rejoice with me because I found the drachma which I lost so I say to you there is joy in the face of the angels of the God over one sinner repenting"

This sort of word-for-word substitution is fairly intelligible in a simple passage, although I would not claim even here that it is translation. But now let us see what happens when we attempt to use this method in a fairly close piece of reasoning, in, for example, St. Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter v. 12-16. (There is no punctuation because, of course, there is no punctuation in the early manuscripts.)

"Because of this as through one man the sin into the world entered and through the sin the death and so to all men the death passed through because all men sinned for until law sin was in world but sin is not reckoned not being law but reigned the death from Adam until Moses even over those not having sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam who is a type of the coming one."

That this sort of thing cannot possibly be true translation is pretty self-evident, but not everybody, judging by my own correspondence appears to have thought of it! It is not only that word-order and idiom are different in different languages, but that words themselves are very much modified by their context. What we are trying to convey, with as little change as possible, is *meaning*. And that is hardly ever achieved by mere verbal substitution.

Before I read Professor Bruce's recently published book *The English Bible*, I had only vaguely realized that one of our earliest English translators was King Alfred the Great. In his preface, Professor Bruce quotes Alfred as saying, when translating from Latin into English, that he does so "sometimes word for word, and sometimes meaning for meaning". This is one of the chief difficulties. If we translate word

for word, even if we change their order, we get an unlovely grouping of words which are certainly not contemporary English. If, on the other hand, we go all out for meaning, we run the risk of being told that we have changed the original. No wonder translation has been described as an impossible art !

But before we consider what the difficulties are in translating what was contemporary Greek into what is contemporary English, we have to realize one formidable obstacle, and that is simply the enormous popularity of the 1611 version. A great many people, and certainly a great many Christian people, cannot see the need for modern translation at all. The beauties and rhythms of the Authorized Version have been closely interwoven with the English way of life for three hundred and fifty years. The very language of the Authorized Version has had a deep and lasting effect on our own literature, quite apart from its spiritual effect on many generations of Christians. It therefore seems unnecessary, and even sacrilegious, to alter what has lasted so well and so long. I, myself, receive quite a number of letters from people who plainly state, and obviously believe, that translation into contemporary English is uncalled for and abhorrent. On the other hand the only reason why I, and, I imagine, other translators, attempted such a difficult task at all was because we found from painful experience that the beautiful language, which we ourselves loved so well, had become archaic to the point of unintelligibility to many others. Christian people must realize this as a fact, however unpalatable it may be. From long practice Bible-lovers probably "translate" as they read. They do not realize that such words as, "let", "prevent", "conversation", "wealth", and many more, have completely altered their meaning. Such archaisms as, "much people followed him", "which of them twain", "Peter and Barnabas waxed bold", "straightened in your own bowels", are practically meaningless today. They forget, too, that "publish" in 1611 was not necessarily anything to do with books, nor "rehearse" anything to do with acting. And so one could go on; the archaisms are either glossed over or, if the reader is an instructed Christian, they are understood by a sort of unconscious translation.

Trevor Huddleston, who speaks from a wider experience of people than most of us, wrote some two years ago these words: "The issue for today, so far as the spread of the Christian Faith is concerned, is the issue of communicating it to a pagan, post-Christian world: a world which has heard a language and relegated it to the four walls of a church; a world which will only hear that language again if it can come with a freshness, a stimulus, a shining sparkle about it." I am certain that Bishop Huddleston is absolutely right. However much I, myself, may love the familiar rhythms and cadences of the three hundred and fifty years' old version, I must recognize that they form an insulating barrier between the Truth of God and many millions of people for whom Christ died.

Every year scores of devoted men and women spend hundreds of hours translating the Word of Life into newly discovered languages, some of which have never been written down before. Now plainly they make no attempt to translate into these strange tongues as they

were spoken three and a half centuries ago ; they are concerned to communicate in the language of today. Surely, therefore, we who translate into English are not unreasonable in trying to make our version contemporary and intelligible.

* * * *

But what sort of English shall we use ? Certainly not slang, which changes fairly rapidly, and we must avoid colloquialisms, which are likely to " date ", as far as possible. But can we, in all honesty, use the same methods as King James's men ? The men of 1611, confronted with what they believed to be " the lively oracles of God " used the finest English for their purpose, making their whole magnificent effort an act of verbal homage. Now we today, with no less reverence, I think, know that the bulk of the New Testament was not written in literary Greek. Nearly all of it is written in the *Koine*, the common Greek language spoken and written by most people in the then known world. With, if I may say so, characteristic humility, God chose as a vehicle for His eternal Gospel, not the splendour of classical Greek, but the popular tongue of the market-place, the seaport, the office, the workshop, and the home. Enormous quantities of papyri written in this form of Greek, and of approximately the same date as the New Testament writings, have become available during this present century. The modern translator who knows far more about this popular tongue than did King James's men, has, perhaps reluctantly, to make up his mind that it is not his job to decorate and polish, but to turn Greek words into English words and meanings in approximately the same style, and that means using ordinary modern English such as is spoken, written, and understood by the majority of people today.

But here again we meet a difficulty. If we completely short-circuit the centuries we inevitably destroy the sense of historical " period " in which the documents were first written. Some, therefore, would argue that ancient words or expressions must not be completely modernized lest today's reader is made to feel that what he is reading is contemporary, whereas, in fact, the Greek was written nearly two thousand years ago. And there is a further point. Although it is virtually certain that the writers of the New Testament were not aware that they were writing Holy Scripture, yet the Church long ago recognized that their writings were uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit. Many, therefore, think it profitable that a translation into today's English should be somewhat elevated in style, and carry a greater dignity than our ordinary everyday speech.

The early Church valued the New Testament Scriptures because they were written by eyewitnesses of God's Life lived among men, or because they were written by men such as Paul who was plainly chosen by God in His Eternal Purpose. When the Church began to decide which books should or should not be included in the official canon, the overriding consideration was whether the book was authentic or not. But when the canon had been finally closed the chosen books rapidly attained the status of " Scripture " and were honoured accordingly. From that time on they ceased to be regarded as purely human documents.

For myself I can see the force of both these arguments against rendering everyday Greek into everyday English. But in my own work I decided to ignore both of them. My reason is simply that after three hundred and fifty years of the Authorized Version, many exciting and challenging truths have been rendered impotent by sheer beauty of language as well as by the familiarity of repetition. I was, and am, prepared to destroy the flavour of historical period if, by so doing, I can liberate the glorious certainty and the almost frightening energy which has for so long been imprisoned.

Over the second point there must always be some disagreement. In my judgment there should be, for liturgical use, a certain heightening of the dignity of language. The original letters, for example, were almost certainly read aloud to small groups of Christians, meeting in secret. The content of the letters was so urgent and important and the circumstance of their reception so often fraught with danger that there was obviously no need to change the language in any way. But, as time went on and a passage of Scripture came to be read for the five hundredth or even the thousandth time, not now to a small group but to a large congregation, I can easily see that whilst the original message must in no way be distorted, the words themselves might have to be changed to match the growing shape of the Liturgy. And this, of course, is what actually happened. For as Latin came to replace Greek throughout Christendom, we find the solid and dignified Latin of St. Jerome's Vulgate ousting the pristine simplicity of New Testament Greek.

But Christians do not always hear the Word of God declaimed before large congregations. There are, in the English-speaking world, countless groups of Christians who meet for Bible study. And every faithful Christian nourishes and sustains his own spiritual life by a private reading of Holy Scripture. Apart, then, from liturgical use before a large congregation, it seems to me that intelligibility, readability, and accuracy in a present-day translation are by far the most important considerations.

The work of the translator is, as I see it, to convey the meaning and sense of one language into the meaning and sense of another. He cannot help being an interpreter, although if he is a conscientious man, he will not allow his personal feelings to colour or "slant" his interpretation. He is somewhat in the position of an interpreter between the heads of State at an International Conference. His sole work is to convey, as accurately as he can, comments or views expressed in one language into another language altogether. However competent he is, his work can never be completely perfect. For not only do the words of one country contain overtones and shades of meaning which are not matched in the words of the other country, but the whole cultural and ethical background of the two countries may be so widely dissimilar that accurate communication is a work of genius. This illustration may serve to show how daunting is the work of the modern translator of the New Testament. The message he is required to transmit is, he believes, both universal and eternal. Yet the more he studies sympathetically the world of the young Church as well as his own contemporary world, the more he feels in despair at making accurate translation. Patterns of thought, the extent of human knowledge, and even ways of everyday

living were so different two thousand years ago that to attempt to reproduce them conscientiously in modern English could easily result in making the Gospel seem more than ever far away and long ago.

But suppose he pursues a different and more hopeful line. Suppose he remembers that human nature and basic human needs are the same in all centuries. Then he will aim not at one hundred per cent accuracy, which is impossible in any case, but at equivalent effect. That is to say, he will try to reproduce in today's hearers and readers the same emotions as were produced by the original documents so long ago. This, to my mind, is a very difficult, but not hopelessly impossible objective.

* * * *

It would seem obvious that the successful translator must know very well indeed the languages of those for whom he is required to interpret. But strangely enough the New Testament scholar of today is considered perfectly adequate for the task if he has a thorough knowledge of Greek and its usages! Few seem to realize that it is every bit as essential that he should know the usage and thought-forms of his English-speaking contemporaries in various walks of life and in various parts of the English-speaking world. The scholar is all too often isolated from the workaday world; he is inclined to use a word or an expression which is most beautifully apt in the ears of his fellow-scholars, but which has long ago become an archaism to ordinary people. And when he does descend to the colloquial he is all too often inclined to use outdated slang. I hope to give examples of this in a later paragraph. For the moment I will only record my conviction that this knowledge of how ordinary people speak, write, and think can only be acquired by reading all kinds of books and periodicals, and by honest conversation on friendly terms with people whose background is far from scholarly.

In recommending the use of ordinary English, I do not mean slang, or colloquial near-slang, which not only change very rapidly, but vary greatly from place to place, and from country to country. I am suggesting as strongly as I can that there is a perfectly sound English vocabulary which is very widely used, quite outside intellectual circles. In the Introduction to the New English Bible, the scholars responsible for that work state that "the rate of change in English usage has accelerated"—and they mean since 1881. I very much doubt whether that is altogether true. I have in my possession bound popular magazines of over sixty years ago, and for the most part I can detect very little change in the language used then and the language commonly used today. The chief difference lies in the fact that modern English is more economical of words. It is not really the hard core of communicative English that has changed very much, at any rate in the present century, but that slang, colloquialisms, and jargon, especially technical jargon, have increased greatly, and the first two change rapidly. We may aim at timeless English but no one can prophesy how long a particular word is going to retain its peculiar meaning and flavour. By careful study of good standard English, we can at least avoid the archaic and the obsolescent. What concerns me is that learned scholars of the New Bible actually appear to know New Testamen-

ment Greek better than they know the current usages of their own tongue. Yet you surely cannot be a successful interpreter unless you know both languages intimately.

We must, therefore, always keep in mind the people for whom we are translating. The men of 1611 were producing a work which, for the most part, would be read in public for a people who were very largely illiterate. Moreover, they were writing for a comparatively small number of people in our own country. The translator today, however, is writing virtually for the whole English-speaking world and he is writing for people who are accustomed to reading, even though their reading matter may not be of a very high intellectual standard. It becomes more than ever necessary that he should familiarize himself with that plain ordinary intelligible English which can be understood in most parts of the world. In other words, good translation today is *almost entirely a matter of communication*. We have far better manuscript evidence than was available in 1611. We have a vast mass of "collateral" Greek papyri to assist us in interpretation, and we have an impressive array of scholarship. There is little doubt, therefore, of what the original New Testament writers meant to say; the problem is purely that of *communicating their meaning* to the average modern reader of English.

One of the most formidable obstacles to good translation into our language today is the, often unconscious, use of "translators' English". In this kind of language we get an unhappy mixture of ancient and modern, a stilted manner of speech which otherwise occurs only in the worse religious plays! Although the meaning in this kind of language is usually pretty clear, the general effect upon the reader is to inform him that he is in the presence of translation. The donnishness, the archaisms, and the scissors-and-paste construction of sentences is likely to prove most irritating. For, apart from the question of style and readability, I believe the modern reader is unconsciously exasperated because the Greek scholar who can find his way about the New Testament blindfold in its original tongue has not troubled to master his, the reader's, customary speech.

Before I give some examples of this unhappy miscarriage in the art of translating, I would like to explain how I think it happens. The translator, who is almost always a practising Christian, finds it extremely difficult to rid his mind of at least the echoes of the 1611 Version. Because he has read the Authorized Version most of his life he does not always realize how archaic some words have become. And because he is conscious of translating sacred material he is loth to let go the dignified security of established words. But, on the other hand, as he studies the Greek of the papyri of the second and third centuries A.D. he sometimes finds sudden illumination. Determined, then, to render what he thinks is the exact flavour of the certain Greek word or expression into modern English, he may then fall into the trap of using what is, in fact, a dated colloquialism, and thus it is that we get this extraordinarily mis-matching of ancient and modern, sometimes within a single sentence.

I have a collection of several hundreds of examples of translators' English which I have noted in recent years. It would be wearisome to

point out the occasional infelicities to be found in Weymouth, Moffatt, and even that excellent American translator, Goodspeed. But Ronald Knox, who aimed at a style that should be "timeless", produces the same sort of unhappiness in such a sentence as this:

"Nobody can say that we are encroaching, that you lie beyond our orbit; our journeys in preaching Christ's gospel took us all the way to you. Ours, then, is no disproportionate boasting, founded on other men's labours; on the contrary, as your faith bears increase, we hope to attain still further vantage-points through you, without going beyond our province, and preach the gospel further afield, without boasting of ready-made conquests in a province that belongs to another. He who boasts, should make his boast in the Lord; it is the man whom God accredits, not the man who takes credit to himself, that proves himself to be true metal" (2 Cor. x. 14-18).

There is no doubt about the meaning here, but what strange English is this? Again, if we look into the careful scholarly work of E. V. Rieu we find such sentences as this:

"But one cannot break into the Strong One's house and plunder his goods, unless one begins by tying up the Strong One. After that one will ransack his house" (Mark iii. 27).

"To which Jesus replied: 'Consent now. It behoves us to conform with all right usage.' And John consented" (Matthew iii. 15).

This is not modern English, and I cannot imagine any century in which such language would be written or spoken.

* * * *

This failure to communicate is, in my opinion, as much a barrier to understanding as the archaism of the Authorized Version. But the richest mine for these deplorable juxtapositions of words, semi-archaisms, and dated slang, is the New English Bible, which has just been published. There are scores of examples of such obstacles to communication, and I will content myself by quoting a few. "Their aim was to frame a charge against him" (Matt. xii. 10); "Every kingdom divided against itself goes to ruin" (Matt. xii. 25); "So they fell foul of him" (Matt. xiii. 57); "Or what can he give that will buy that self back?" (Matt. xvi. 26); "If your hand or your foot is your undoing, cut it off . . ." (Matt. xviii. 8); "Tell her to come and lend a hand" (Luke x. 40); "We are not base-born" (John viii. 41); ". . . a propagandist for foreign deities" (Acts xvii. 18); "Let us exult in the hope of the divine splendour that is to be ours" (Romans v. 2); ". . . be consolidated in the faith . . ." (Col. ii. 7); "Tell them to hoard a wealth of noble actions by doing good" (1 Tim. vi. 18); ". . . for in all such ways they will add lustre to the doctrine of God our Saviour" (Titus ii. 10); ". . . if you give fortitude full play . . ." (James i. 4).

It really passes my understanding that a literary panel which, we are told, existed to correct and improve the English of the translators

panel, should allow these and a great many more similar expressions to be passed as contemporary English.

In my experience there is no substitute for the sheer labour of understanding both sides. If it is of interest, my own method has been somewhat as follows. First, a literal translation of the Greek is made, using every possible aid from lexicon or commentary in order to feel what the Greek really means. Then, completely forgetting the Greek, and as oblivious as one can be to the familiar echoes of the Authorized Version, the resultant rather odd English is put into the language of today. This is then read, read aloud, tried out on various friends, and on intelligent but not outstandingly intellectual people, and further corrections are made. Then the work is put away while another part of it is translated and after an interval of some weeks the first corrected version is examined again. Probably still more correction is called for, and then, at the final stage, the resultant version, which by now is in acceptable modern English, is compared with the Greek. This is not only to ensure as high a degree of accuracy as possible, but to secure, as far as one can, that equivalent effect which is the aim and object of the whole operation. This process, which I can see no way of shortening, means that at least six, and sometimes more, versions are made before one's instincts as a translator are satisfied.

I see, then, this problem of translation into modern English in terms of the thorough understanding both of the original Greek and of the vocabulary, thoughts, and minds of the people who are likely to read in English today. But we must do even more than this. We have to use imaginative sympathy with the writers of long ago. We shall never "get across" the passionate urgency of Paul, for example, unless we use every scrap of knowledge and inference that we can find in order to put ourselves imaginatively in his shoes. Naturally, this is not easy, nor can it be done without its particular cost. But we must studiously avoid the sort of detachment which is sometimes adopted by the well-bred English layman when he is asked "to read the Lessons" in church. Quite possibly, on the technical level, he reads well, but if there is the faintest note of, "I-am-reading-this-as-best-I-can,-but-it-has-nothing-to-do-with-me" in his diction, then he has no hope at all of communicating the real New Testament.

If we are to be successful translators we cannot afford to be detached. We must feel to the full the love and compassion, the near despair and the unshakable hope, the gay courage and the bitter hostility of this most extraordinary period of human history. Unless we, too, experience the awe and wonder of the earlier disciples, unless we can share to some extent the certainty and fortitude of the young Church, and unless we can sympathize with the deep pastoral concern of the apostles, we shall never communicate the living heart of New Testament writing, however immaculate our translation may be.

The Bible in English History

BY STEPHEN NEILL

JOHN RICHARD GREEN, in his *Short History*, made the famous remark that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth the English people became the people of a book and that book the Bible. It is hardly too much to say that in the sixteenth century the English language became the language of one book, and that book the Bible; and, since the language that men speak penetrates to the very recesses of their being, and influences thought and attitude and judgment in ways that are past reckoning, it is no exaggeration to maintain that the English Bible was, up till the end of the nineteenth century, one of the strongest creative forces that made and moulded the English way of life and the history of the English people.

It is hard to think of two historical events more important than the production of the first New Testament in modern English by Tyndale in 1528, and the order of Henry VIII in 1538, which made possible the setting up of the Great Bible in English Churches, and the reading aloud of the Word of God in a language understood of the people. All the evidence goes to show that at that time folk in England fell in love with the Bible; they would have it and hear it and make it their own. Nevertheless, it was only fifty years later that the Bible took hold on the mind and heart of the people generally in the profound manner that finds expression in the remark of J. R. Green. In this respect the reign of Queen Elizabeth is more important than that of either Henry VIII or Edward VI. For this, several reasons can be adduced. Once the troubles of the age had begun a little to abate, Protestantism let loose, as it always does, a great surge of educational effort; probably far more people could read at the end of the sixteenth century than at its beginning. Many more copies of the Scriptures, and in much cheaper editions, became generally available; it was the Geneva Bible, with its liberally provided Calvinistic annotations, that first became the Bible of the English people as a whole. In those days everyone had to go to church, whether they wished to or not. The lessons were far longer than the irregular fragments which are served up to us in our more recent lectionaries; Cranmer gave us never less than a chapter, and, if a chapter seemed a little short, he gave us two to make up. It is possible, as we all know well, to sleep through the lessons; yet the words regularly heard do in some mysterious way penetrate the mind; those of us who have attended daily service in school chapels for four years know that we have carried away something ineffaceable, though we might find it hard to say exactly what it was.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, only a limited number of the clergy were licensed to preach—the pulpit could be a dangerous political weapon. Others were limited to the reading of the Homilies. These

rather lengthy documents would be found heavy going by most congregations today; and I do not suppose that the ploughboys and dairy-maids of four hundred years ago could follow them in detail—they probably spent more time looking at one another. Yet once again, the massive biblical theology of the Homilies, with their many actual quotations, must have left a certain deposit in the mind, a certain familiarity not only with the words but with the biblical way of looking at things, and at least the rudiments of a Christian judgment.

The result, and here I think once again all the evidence points in the same direction, was a most notable raising of moral standards throughout the nation. The question of the ethical results of the Reformation has been rather bitterly debated by historians. There is no doubt that the Reformers, from Luther on, complained sadly and often in biting terms of the wickedness that they saw around them, even in such centres of Reformed teaching as Geneva and Wittenberg. But such complaints of sinfulness can spring from a more sensitive conscience and a raising of expectation and demand, no less than from an actual deepening of corruption or degeneration of standards. To compare the moral achievement of one age with that of another is a difficult and delicate operation, and here there is no precise certainty. I am inclined to think that in the early days of the Reformation in England there was a lowering of standards. There was a relaxation of the restraints and controls which had still to some extent held society together in the late Middle Ages; the reign of Edward VI was a bad and reckless time, in which the fortunes of both State and Church fell into evil hands: when the leaders were so bad, it is not surprising that the rank and file were all too ready to profit by their example. Yet even that bad time produced such spotless flowers as the Lady Jane Gray, a blameless Christian, who would almost certainly have been canonized, if she had belonged to the Roman Catholic and not to the Reformed faith. But, when we come to the reign of Elizabeth, I believe that it is possible to trace a steady rise in ethical standards, and a corresponding improvement in conduct. The court continued to be medieval, and had its full share of violence and scandals. But by the end of the reign there are signs of that solid, unobtrusive piety, with its strong ethical emphasis, which has been characteristic of English religion until recent times. All that was most vigorous and creative in the national life had rallied to the Protestant cause; especially after the defeat of the Armada, the age of Elizabeth was a time of great hopes and great achievements; the expressions of faith in God and of his purpose for his English people may well have been more than conventional.

We are very badly off for personal diaries and similar intimate records of the sixteenth century, though a certain number have come to light. What many of us have found illuminating has been the record of the Puritan gentry, as revealed to us in Prof. J. E. Neale's superb volumes on Elizabeth and her Parliaments. No doubt quite a number of these gentlemen were prickly, and professors of a less than attractive piety; one cannot but sympathize with the Queen at times when she packed them off to the Tower. Yet the spirit of deep seriousness that breathes through them is notable; these men knew what it meant to be Christians and responsible Christians, and it was in the

light of the word of God that they desired that both their actions and their Church should be judged.

I am inclined to think that much can be learned about this period from the plays of Shakespeare. Many studies have been made of Shakespeare's religion, all inconclusive; the man hides himself from us behind his work. But some years ago, when I read through the entire Shakespearean corpus in nine months, I ended with the impression of a deep influence of the Bible on Shakespeare's mind. He rarely quotes directly, and the frequency of the allusions naturally varies very much from play to play. Yet reading in roughly chronological order I felt that the biblical influence grows stronger, as one moves forward with Shakespeare in his work. This is a profoundly moral universe; here is man's life seen from every conceivable angle, and in its rich and endless variety; but basically this is man's life as lived in the presence of God; to be a man is always a splendid thing, and it is the hallmark of a true man that he knows how to live responsibly in freedom.

If we speak of the influence of the Bible, it is necessary to distinguish between three different aspects of what we are talking about. There is first knowledge of what is in the Bible, simple acquaintance with its text. Then there is an understanding of the way in which the Bible thinks, a relatedness to the Bible point of view and to its judgment on human life. Thirdly, there is the attempt to take seriously the application of the law of God to the affairs of men in personal and in public life.

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When we come to the seventeenth century, I am inclined to think that knowledge of the text of the Bible continued to grow and to spread. Every great house had its chaplain; the daily offices of the Church of England were read every day to the entire household, which in those days was very large. We find on both sides in the civil war numbers of laymen with a deep knowledge of theology and a serious interest in the whole question of the will of God for man. The Puritans are beginning to come into their own again today, and to recover from the effects of the caricature brilliantly presented by Macaulay and others of his day. No doubt there was much that was narrow, prejudiced, and foolish. But what stands out in the real Puritans is, first, their intense sense of the responsibility of man in the presence of God—a lesson we might learn again profitably today, when there is rightly so much talk of the responsible society; and, secondly, the quiet joy by which they were thrilled in the sense of reconciliation with God and of vocation to His service. In a very real sense the men of that time were still medieval. The modern world, with its sharp distinction between the sacred and the secular, was not yet upon them. There were already signs of its coming; but the two great books which in different ways indicated the change from the mood of the Middle Ages, Locke's *On the Human Understanding* and Newton's *Principia Mathematica*, were not published until respectively 1687 and 1690. Men still saw the universe as a single whole under the sovereignty of God; indeed Newton himself so saw it, though he was one of the chief architects of that independence of

scientific thought from the idea of God which is still one of our problems today. Men still dreamed of a unified society, in which the same men were under one aspect citizens, and under another churchmen, the two societies being co-extensive, and both under the direction of the Word of God, thought in different manners corresponding to the discrete responsibility of each. There were very differing ideas as to the way in which Church and State should be organized—that was ultimately what they fought each other about. But the use of the word “state” in this context is really an anachronism; the wholly autonomous and impersonal state was a creation of a later age, though thinkers of later days could look back to Hobbes’ *Leviathan* as a precursor of their own type of thinking.

Yet something else was stirring under the surface in those days, which was laden with great promise for the future, and itself was based on certain profound convictions derived from the Scriptures. The word “democracy” is used in so many different senses today that perhaps its were better for the time being abandoned. In British history, democracy can trace its origins to Christian faith, and to a particular understanding of certain parts of the biblical message. The independents lit upon a new concept of human personality and responsibility, and went beyond the discoveries of the other reformers and reformations. In their meetings of believers, it was held that all who were born of the Spirit were in every way equal in the sight of God; the word might at any moment be given to any of them, and to this genuine word of God all others must pay humble and reverent attention. To this conviction was allied a particular understanding of the nature of the Church, which in later times it has become fashionable to call, not quite fairly, the sect type. Carried to its extremes, this conviction might be thought well calculated to lead to total anarchy; yet perhaps it is not very far removed from the picture given by Paul of church meetings in Corinth; and the men who professed this view were not greatly afraid of anarchy, since they held that, where a meeting was held under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in reliance on Him, God who is a God of order would see to it that His own will should prevail.

It was not a long step to carry this understanding of man and his potentialities over from the Church to the world, and from the intimate society of the Church to the larger society, the nation or the people. And this step was in fact taken, though naturally in a hesitant and uncertain fashion. But it is to these groups of largely simple men, acting in reliance on what they believed to be a correct understanding of the Bible, that we should look for at least one of the main roots of what we understand as democracy today. Another very different type of democracy has its origin in the thought of Rousseau and the idea of the rights of man; it may be thought that Rousseau too had learned something from the Bible. American democracy in its origins is a curious mixture of the two streams—a rather rationalistic and deistic reading of the Bible, and a good deal of eighteenth century French thought—though it is to be noted that the last thing that the Founding Fathers had any idea of was that they were founding a state that might one day turn into a democracy, and many passages can be quoted from their writings, in which they plainly express their horror at the very

thought of democracy ; good classicists, they may have agreed with the Athenian Alcibiades that democracy is acknowledged folly. In later times, British democracy has been affected by thoughts and ideas derived from many sources ; it is not a clear stream. And it is hard to trace our present system back in any detail to biblical concepts. Yet many Christians today would affirm that, if they believe democracy to be ultimately the only form of government compatible with the Christian apprehension of man, they learned the principles from those obscure forerunners in the seventeenth century, and from their conviction that the poorest he in England hath a life to live as much as the richest he. It was from the neglected doctrine of the Holy Spirit that the idea of Christian equality was derived.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* has been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible. It is in its own right a work of pure genius. But it is also interesting, as showing more clearly than any other work written up to its time in English the direct effect of the Bible on the English language and English style. Almost the whole literature of the seventeenth century is deeply marked by the Bible. The massive and profound mind of Milton, scholar and lay theologian, wrestles endlessly with the ways of God and the destiny of man. In *Samson Agonistes*, which some would regard as an even more perfect work than *Paradise Lost*, he shows how an English mind can take a biblical theme, rethink it after the Greek fashion, and miraculously produce out of it a noble and characteristically English work of art. In all the utterances of his organ voice, both in prose and poetry, biblical themes and thoughts recur. Yet the style is not the least that of the Bible. And the same is true of the poets. Donne and Herbert are influenced by the standards of their time, and even some of their best work is marred by conceits, which can be understood in terms of the canons of the day, and yet fall far below the highest level of artistic expression. Rhetoric and elaboration still hold the field. The eloquence is often splendid ; and English literature would be far poorer without Hooker and Sir Thomas Browne. All the more notable is the change that comes over English, both poetry and prose, but particularly prose, towards the end of the seventeenth century. And it is here that Bunyan is so significant. A man of comparatively little culture, his mind had been formed far more on the Bible than on any other model ; and he, for the first time, showed how imagination and simplicity can go hand in hand, and produce that which is memorable and moving with recourse to no more than the simplest artifice.

It is most unlikely that those who developed the new style had undergone the influence of Bunyan. Similar developments can occur at the same time in complete independence of one another, and Bunyan may be held to be a symptom rather than a cause. And it is difficult to trace direct influence of the Bible in the new, and almost timeless, English that was coming into being. It is, however, interesting to note that three of the most distinguished writers of the first half of the eighteenth century were churchmen—Bishop Butler, Bishop Berkeley, and Dean Swift ; their minds were steeped in the letter of the Bible, and perhaps something of the vigour and clarity of the Authorized Version have found their way into the clarity and vigour with which

these writers expressed their thoughts. Sir Roger de Coverley no doubt had a good knowledge of the Bible, as well as of the sermons of Dr. South and Dr. Tillotson ; and some of this he may have passed on to his friends, Mr. Addison and Mr. Steele.

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The eighteenth century is the period in which we begin to see steadily growing the sense of the duality of things ; an outer world which science is increasingly rendering autonomous, so that it becomes more and more difficult to find any place for God in it ; and a world of piety which finds it increasingly difficult to relate itself to the affairs of everyday life. Yet recent research has to some extent restored the credit of that century, and shown that, along with much that was corrupt and cynical, there was still a solid basis of goodness in the English character. The reader of the Bible was selective, as we all are ; he could take in only those aspects of it which were, to use a much later expression, on his wave length. The one attribute of God which, more than any other, seems to have had significance for eighteenth century man was benevolence ; God is kindly, and has ordered His creation for the benefit of man. Man is most like God when he is exercising benevolence. The theme recurs endlessly in the literature and the sermons of the time. And from thought came action : the Charity Schools of the reigns of Queen Anne and of the Georges were a genuine expression of Christian charity and the will to serve. No doubt this will was limited in understanding and lacked passion. Men did not see beyond the immediate effects of inequality and poverty, and their thought did not go beyond doing what could be done, without any great effort, to relieve the hardships. They were blind to many things that to us are self-evidently evil, as we in our turn no doubt have our blind spots. They did not conceive of such radical changes in the whole system as might make these evils a thing of the past. But such far-reaching prophetic vision is not given to all, and it is better to praise our fathers for what they did than to criticize them too harshly for what they failed to do.

In a wholly different direction the influence of the Bible is writ deep on the mind and life of eighteenth century England. This was the century in which the English hymn began to come into its own. Luther had been a great writer of hymns and adapter of earlier material. He had many followers. An astonishing proportion of the hymns still sung in Germany today, and many of the noblest melodies, are of the sixteenth century. We have hardly anything to show in comparison. Cranmer could write glorious prose ; but, as he himself ruefully admits, he had no gift at all for writing verse—and this is to put it kindly. From the seventeenth century we can quote certain splendid hymns ; but most of these were written as poems, not hymns, and there is always a difference between the two kinds of composition—a difference not always noted by the compilers of hymnals. It is only with Dr. Watts and Mr. Wesley that our great period really begins. This is of quite incalculable importance. Tell me what Christians sing, and I will estimate fairly accurately the quality of their spiritual life. Hymns penetrate the mind and spirit ; and perhaps the religion of the average Englishman is more deeply determined by the hymns which he learned

as a child than by any other single factor. If he has been condemned to learn "We are but little children weak", and "There's a friend for little children", it is not surprising if later on he becomes profoundly unreligious.

The great thing about the hymns of Watts and the Wesleys is that they are so profoundly biblical. A few are deliberate paraphrases—the tradition of the metrical Psalms was already well established. But on the whole these hymns are independent compositions in which the biblical material has been taken over, freely handled, and adapted to a wholly different medium of communication. "Jesu, Lover of my soul" is almost a patchwork of biblical allusions, the first being rather surprisingly from the Apocrypha; and, though the most popular, is certainly not one of the best of the Wesleys' hymns. Charles Wesley especially, has a rich vocabulary of his own, and does not depend too closely on the biblical wording. Who but Charles Wesley would have thought of beginning a hymn with the words, "Jesus in whom my soul hath sought Her late but *permanent* repose"?

The tradition of hymn-writing, once set in motion, has never died out, and each generation has some distinguished writing to show. But never again was the standard of the eighteenth century attained. The only later writer who can compare with the Wesleys is Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta. It is only at his very best that John Keble comes anywhere near the level of Heber. It is known that Heber had planned to write a complete set of hymns for the Church's year, when some ill-judging friend dissuaded him from carrying out his purpose, to our tragic and lasting loss; how much richer would our hymn-books be, if we had another fifty hymns of the standard of "Holy, holy, holy", and "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning"!

As the eighteenth century went on, the influence of the Bible tended to decline. As the Evangelical Revival took hold, in the Church of England as well as among the non-Anglicans, it tended steadily to revive again.

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Symptomatic of the change is the foundation in 1804 of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that marvellous precursor of so much later ecumenical activity. Once again a planned and systematic attempt was made to bring the Bible within reach of the ordinary reader. But the society has affected the Englishman's knowledge of Scripture in a very peculiar way. Of those who possess Bibles in England today, probably not one in ten has ever seen the Apocrypha. Owing to the honest convictions of some nonconformists, the Society decided not to print Bibles that could be used in Church. I myself find it very hard to understand how reputable scholars can place the books of the Apocrypha on the same level, or almost on the same level, as the inspired books of the Hebrew Canon. I find Sirach one of the dullest authors who ever wrote, and in my opinion we read far too much of him in our present lectionaries (not so much this year, Easter having been rather late). All the same, it seems to me to be a great pity that other bodies should have followed the Bible Society in this reduction of the Bible; and, in

view of the historical importance of some of the books of the Greek Canon, they surely ought to be there.

To the intensity of Bible study among the Evangelicals Canon E. W. Watson is witness in his excellent little book on the Church of England. It would have been well, if not quite so much time had been spent on the study of unfulfilled prophecy. But, on the whole, Bible-reading was a very practical business ; men recovered the idea of a will of God which is to prevail in the affairs of men. The Evangelical leaders were never tired of appealing to "the conscience of a Christian nation"—a somewhat optimistic form of words, yet the success of their countless enterprises for the good of mankind and the relief of suffering show that, optimistic as they may have been, they were not visionary. They believed that conscience is the voice of God in man ; that conscience can be educated and refined through the pondering of the Word of God ; and that when a man is prepared to respond in obedience the Holy Spirit will show him just what he should do. It was in this spirit that the Evangelicals sallied forth to do battle with the evils of slavery and industrial injustice. With a rueful realism they were well aware of the limits of what can be achieved by legislation ; yet as far as man could go on this road, they would go. They were limited in horizon by the circumstances of their time ; they did not see that the industrial revolution which had been used by wicked men for the enslavement of a large part of the human race could, in the providence of God, come to be used for its emancipation. It was left for their successors to see and to proclaim that vision.

One of the hoary old myths, that no production of the evidence seems able to kill, is to the effect that the Church did little for education, and that the education of the nation was undertaken only when the radicals passed the great Act of 1870. In point of fact, through the efforts of the Churches, notably through the National Society and the British Schools Society, England had, before 1870, been provided with almost as many school places as there were children, though owing to the immense shift of population in the nineteenth century many of the schools were in the wrong places, and building had not caught up with the growth in population. In all these schools the Bible was the basis of education. It was taught crudely, unintelligently, unimaginatively ; yet the teaching of it meant that the children were exposed week in week out to some of the greatest literature in the world, and were imbued with something of its spirit and its outlook on the world. They were not, however, encouraged to think such dangerous thoughts as might arise from taking such revolutionary passages as the Magnificat too literally ; the Bible was generally regarded as a useful safeguard for the existing social order. Perhaps the most notable comment on the success of this Christian education was a remark of Thomas Hardy in *Tess of the Durbervilles* to the effect that Tess, like all the poor, knew the Bible well. Hardy understood remarkably well the people of whom he wrote ; if he said that it was so, it was so—and it certainly would not be true today.

It is impossible to read much of the literature of the mid-nineteenth century without receiving a very clear and sharp impression of the penetration of the minds of the writers by biblical phrases and biblical

thoughts. The process had begun long before the beginning of the Victorian age. The most seminal mind of the nineteenth century was perhaps that of Coleridge ; we encounter his influence at almost every point, and in men like Bishop Westcott who lived till the beginning of the twentieth century. Coleridge read the Bible, not as a collection of theologumena, proof texts for the defence of an orthodox system, but with a lively and imaginative mind ; it was to him the book that *found* him as no other book found him ; it was on this quality of direct and burning relevance that he founded his understanding of the inspiration of Scripture. Unquestionably, this attitude helped many of the theologians, who were trying to find their way out of the painful literalism of earlier days without losing their grip on the essentials of the biblical faith ; but his attitude is reflected also in many of the greatest lay writers of the century, who, while not finding it possible to commit themselves to the acceptance of every detail of Christian dogma, yet desired to make the Christian standards the guide of their footsteps.

We are at last beginning to grow away from the Lytton Strachey picture of the smug and hypocritical Victorians, and to recognize in them a generation of gifted, passionate, and terribly sincere people, restless, questioning, and often dissatisfied. We may take Tennyson as, in this respect, the typical Victorian. *In Memoriam* could not have been written unless Tennyson had had a minute and extensive acquaintance with the text of the Bible ; but this, like most of his later writings, is not so much the expression of a robust and confident faith as the confession of a seeking spirit, always wrestling with the new problems of the age, and never able to find a completely satisfying solution of them. Matthew Arnold was to carry further this note of scepticism ; yet he was a true Victorian, with his almost missionary sense of vocation to transmit to his contemporaries his own intelligent but reduced version of the biblical faith. A stronger note is heard in Robert Browning, who, like Tennyson, never felt quite at home in orthodox Christian circles, but whose understanding of the essence of biblical theology is profound. It has to be admitted that the David of his *Saul* is a highly romantic figure, who has little to do with the robber-chieftain of the cave of Adullam. Yet in *A Death in the Desert* Browning was to produce what a number of good authorities regard as the best existing exposition of the theology of the Fourth Gospel.

This Biblical character of nineteenth century literature is perhaps seen best in two writers who, though not among the greater, are perhaps for that very reason among the most characteristic—Charles Kingsley and John Henry Newman. Neither of these men could have been produced by any soil other than that of England ; neither could have been what he was apart from the solid Evangelical background of biblical thinking. And, different as the two men were in almost every respect, and almost predestined to be adversaries even had they never actually engaged in their celebrated controversy, one can trace curious lines of resemblance and similarity between them. Three poets who, towards the end of the century, were to express a rather more confident Christian faith—Coventry Patmore, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Francis Thompson—were all, as it happened, Roman Catholics. The biblical quality is not wholly absent from their writing ; it is interesting

to note that now it seems to be rather a remote echo than of the very substance of their thinking and their self-expression.

At one crucial point the rediscovery of the Bible has left its mark deep on the subsequent history of the British people. Frederick Denison Maurice had, like almost all his contemporaries, learned a great deal from Coleridge ; and it was in the name of the Bible, intelligently read and independently understood, that he was to challenge the false philosophy which was leading the world into destruction. For the serious thing about the industrial revolution was not that it was an age of poverty and distress for many—poverty had always existed, and famine was not unknown in Britain—but that the new inequalities and hardships were being justified by a system of thought which eliminated the truly human in favour of abstract principles and a supposed identity of interests. Maurice was a prophet for the industrial age. It is not always easy to understand the drift of his thought ; but in all his countless sermons and lectures on Scripture, the recurrent thought is that of the sovereignty of Christ over all realms of being ; there are no autonomous areas which may withdraw themselves from the scrutiny of His law or the authority of His kingdom. The old Christian concepts of charity and benevolence, never completely out of date, are not adequate to cope with the demands of this situation. The Christian Socialism of Maurice was a new and creative discovery, a reading out of the Bible of something that was genuinely there. Whenever the World Council of Churches pronounces today on some great issue of social or economic import, consciously or unconsciously, it is following on the path that Maurice, often dimly and confusedly, saw as the way of the coming of the kingdom of God among men.

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And now the situation has almost wholly changed. For the first time since the Reformation the Bible is an unknown book to the majority of the people of England. This is a fact of which there cannot be the smallest doubt, though opinions may differ widely as to the reasons for the great change that has taken place. There is still a good deal of diffused awareness of the Christian faith ; this comes out at Christmas and Easter, and not only in the superficial and undesirable elements of purely secular merry-making. Even modern man cannot escape from the biblical temper of the English language. Men still escape by the skin of their teeth, and welcome back the prodigal—though they might well be hard put to it to explain the origin of the phrases. But the experience of clergy and teachers alike confirms the impression of the less directly concerned observer that the vast majority of people in Britain never open a Bible, have very little idea indeed of what is in it, and are hardly influenced at any point by the biblical tradition of which we have been speaking.

This impression is confirmed by a glance at the literature of recent years. I have long held the opinion that George Meredith was the first purely non-Christian writer of the modern world in Britain. It was not that he was strongly against the faith ; but in so many of his books he succeeded in writing as though the Christian faith simply did not exist, or, at least, did not exist as a subject in which any intelligent

man could be expected to take an interest. In this he has had a great many successors. Many modern writers give the impression that they have never in their lives met an intelligent Christian. One of the most typical figures of this century was John Maynard Keynes the economist. His biography makes it clear that, after his contemptuous rejection of the Christian faith while a boy at Eton, he never gave it another thought, and seems never to have asked himself why a number of his contemporaries, of intellect equal to his own, were still humble and confessing Christians. It is this attitude of supreme indifference that is the greatest danger to the faith—greater than that of the direct attacks upon it, since these at least presuppose that the enemy is worthy to be attacked.

The disappearance of the biblical tradition may be traced on three levels.

There is, first, the sheer ignorance of the text, to which we have already alluded. The means, among other things, that Jesus Christ is to the average Englishman of today a mainly mythological figure, and the mental picture of Him which has formed itself in his mind bears very little relation indeed to the majestic and tragic figure which we meet in the Gospels.

Next, there is the fading out of the Bible way of thinking. In the ages of faith, man was always seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. It is a great and dangerous thing to be a man. There is a purpose of God in history, though it may not always be easy to discern it. And actions taken in time have eternal consequences. The contemporary picture of man is as different from this as could be imagined. He is thought of in biological, sociological, and economic terms. Far more than we recognize we have yielded to the Marxist heresy, and think in Marxist rather than in Christian terms.

When it comes to practical action, the last thing that would occur to most men would be that guidance might be found in the Bible. In the past men have often looked naïvely and uncritically to the Bible for guidance, and have asked of it questions that it was never meant to answer, and in point of fact does not answer. But they were right in thinking that the Bible does reveal to us the great principles on which any true human life for man or nation must be based; that in wrestling with Scripture we may find light and understanding of our situation and of the will of God for our time. Today we live in an almost wholly pagan society, and our proposed remedies for our ills reflect the barrenness and confusion of our spirits.

It must be recognized that we see around us the beginnings of a new Christian literature and a new Christian art. The fantastically high sales of the new English translation of the New Testament may mean that something is in the wind. But the wisest of us are likely to admit that we do not really know what is to be done about this pagan situation. Improved religious teaching in the schools is one point at which some impression can be made. Broadcasting and television are far from contemptible allies. But the Church is the place where a new beginning has to be made. After all, quite a number of people still do go to church. How often do they hear the lessons read in such a way that they speak to the hearer as the Word of God? And how often do

they hear from the pulpit plain straightforward exposition of the word of God, the kind of sermon which, while paying full respect to the intelligence of the hearers as grown men and women, is content to tell them just what the Bible says, and just what it means, and, as far as can be discerned, what it has to say to them today? A beginning is only a first step. But here, as in so many other fields, it is always the first step that counts.

The Revised Catechism

BY JAMES PACKER

THE labours of the Commission which the Archbishops appointed in February, 1958 to revise the Church Catechism are now before us (*A Revised Catechism*, S.P.C.K., price 2/-). The document is one that evokes both admiration and sympathy for those who produced it. They were set an impossible task, at which they have failed brilliantly. Indeed, their performance is so distinguished that a first reading of their Catechism almost convinces one that they have succeeded; though a second reading gives a truer impression. But it is not their fault that they have not succeeded. What they were asked to do simply could not be done. It is indeed, the very brilliance of their work that brings this out. What they have achieved may be compared with the Charge of the Light Brigade (we hope they will not resent this; it is an honourable comparison). They have made a noble attempt at something which it was not sense to ask them to do, and which in the circumstances was bound to be some sort of a failure. "Someone had blunder'd"—they were given unrealistic orders. Prayer Book revision, like diplomacy, is the art of the possible, and some things are not possible. Part of what statesmanship means is that one confines oneself to the realm of the possible. A study of the Revised Catechism serves only to confirm what should have been clear in 1956, when the Archbishops were asked to set up the Commission—namely, that it is not possible to revise the Catechism satisfactorily with the Church of England in her present state.

What was the Commission set to do? Its terms of reference gave it a double task. It was "to consider the revision of the Church Catechism in order that *its scope may be enlarged and its language made more suitable for present conditions*".

Now the *second* of these tasks was undoubtedly practical politics. It was simply a matter of eliminating archaisms and anachronisms, of seeing that all the wording of the new Catechism was in line with contemporary speech, and that all references to social and cultural matters were made in up-to-date terms. The Commission has, in fact, done this part of its work very ably. For simplicity and conciseness,

plainness and dignity, the language of the new Catechism would be hard to beat.

The Commission has not fallen victim to the temptation to make the faith cheap, by expressing it in the arch and slangy journalese which Christian teachers often affect today to try and get on to the linguistic wavelength of our time. Nor have they denied themselves the use of a proper theological vocabulary as the medium of instruction. "It has not been possible, nor would it be desirable," writes Dr. Coggan, the chairman, "to avoid using certain terms which belong to the technical language of theology. No one can enter into the heritage of Christian faith and worship without some understanding of these words, and in our view it is the responsibility of the catechist to explain them" (p. ix). For this approach they are to be applauded.

But what of their *first* task? That was a more problematical business altogether. They were invited to enlarge the scope of the Church Catechism. But on what principles? How were they to decide what extra subjects to cover, and what to say about each of them? Such queries raise the more fundamental issue: what canons of judgment should determine the contents of any catechism? This is a grave theological question, and one which calls for more discussion than it seems thus far to have received.

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Both the history and theology of the catechumenate, as a training-school for adult Christianity, suggest that the right principles for deciding what a catechism should, and should not, contain are two.

1. A catechism should *limit itself to Christian essentials*. The catechumenate should be viewed as, first and foremost, an ecumenical institution, the purpose of which is to inculcate "mere Christianity". As Professor T. F. Torrance has recently written:

The Catechisms set forth Christian doctrine at its closest to the mission, life, and growth of the Church from age to age, for they aim to give a comprehensive exposition of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the whole Counsel of God and the whole life of the people of God. . . . They shape the mind of the historical Church, building up its understanding of the Faith and directing its growth and development. . . . While each Church provides this instruction in responsible fulfilment of its mission in its own place and time in history, the Catechism is designed, not for the self-expression and self-culture of a particular Church, but to serve the Communion of Saints, so that all who use it may worship one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and be schooled in one Faith in the unity of the whole Church of God past and present. It is for that reason that the common basis of the Catechisms has traditionally been the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, and these have been expounded as far as possible in the universal language of the Church, and apart from the particular characteristics of any one Church and age (*The School of Faith*, 1959, p. xi).

From this it follows that it is theologically improper for catechisms to include anything more than the minimum that is thought necessary for a healthy adult faith. Non-essentials have no place in them. Nor should catechisms contain matter that ministers merely to denominational self-consciousness or self-defence. It is true that catechisms, like Communion services, are found within some denomination or other, but the catechumenate is not denominational property any more than the

Lord's Table is, and it would be as wrong to use the former for purposes of denominational propaganda as it would be to use the latter. If what our transatlantic friends call "denominational distinctives" are put into a catechism (as, for instance, the Pope's headship is put into all Roman catechisms), this can only be justified on the ground that knowledge of these things is ordinarily necessary for salvation—in other words, that they are, in fact, part of the Gospel. (This, of course, is precisely what Rome would claim about the papal headship.) But nothing that cannot be defended as being part of the Gospel has any right of entry into a catechism. Catechisms exist to set out the bare essentials of catholic Christianity, and if they go beyond these it is not a virtue, but a defect. It would be theologically wrong to enlarge the scope of any catechism beyond the realm of that knowledge which is necessary for the spiritual health and safety of the individual Christian.

This has an important corollary for Anglicans. Historic Anglicanism rests on the principle that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation" (Article VI). It follows, therefore, that in any catechism that is fit for Anglicans to use every assertion will admit of Scripture proof. At least one Anglican theologian has recently stressed this point. The report entitled *Principles of Prayer Book Revision*, by a select committee of C.I.P.B.C., published in 1957, tells us that when the principle governing additions to the Catechism came under discussion, "one member . . . maintained that since the reception of Holy Communion is generally necessary to salvation, the normal instruction to be required of all before admission to Holy Communion should be restricted to what is necessary to eternal salvation. In view of the principle . . . that 'the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity to eternal salvation' it follows that every part of the Catechism, as the normal standard of instruction before Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion, must be capable of proof by Holy Scripture" (p. 60). Exactly. This, the principle on which all the Reformation Catechisms were compiled, including our own, seems to be the only principle that it is open to an Anglican to adopt. We conclude, therefore, that any part of a catechism for the Church of England which could not be proved by Holy Scripture would, by Anglican standards, have no business to be there; for what cannot be proved by Scripture cannot be necessary to salvation, and doctrines, however true, and facts, however interesting, that are not necessary to salvation have no place in rightly constructed catechisms.

"The aim of the Commission," writes Dr. Coggan, "has been to set out the minimum basic facts necessary for instruction in the Christian faith" (p. vii). This suggests that they recognized the principle that only essentials should appear in catechisms. Presumably, therefore, the reason why they "felt it imperative to add material on, for example, the Church, the means of grace, the Bible, Christian duty, and the Christian hope" (p. ix) was because they judged all this extra matter to be essential and indispensable for the making of adult Christians. Presumably, too, omissions are to be explained on this principle. When Dr. Coggan refers to "much material which different people would have liked to see included in the new Catechism, but for which there is no room", we take him to mean, not that the Commission was

only allowed to produce a catechism of a certain maximum length (there is nothing in the terms of reference to suggest that), but simply that the Commission did not regard anything more than what it actually included as being essential and indispensable for catechetical purposes. We suppose, also, that it was this same principle of judgment that led the Commission to exceed its terms of reference and *delete* certain doctrines which find a place in the existing Church Catechism (see below).

It seems doubtful, however, whether the Commission related the principle that only Christian essentials should appear in the Catechism to this further principle, that nothing which cannot be proved by Scripture can be regarded as a Christian essential. Looking at the new material, we defy anyone to prove from Scripture what is said (for instance) about the relative functions of the threefold ministry (14-17), the nature of Confirmation (43), or the Church's ministry in marriage (53). Also, if our argument so far is sound, we must regard the definitions of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion (18, 19)—on any showing, a sad lurch into denominational arrogance—as improper intrusions. Their presence disfigures the new Catechism, and they ought to go. But more of this in a moment.

2. The second principle for determining the proper contents of a Catechism is this : that the Catechism should limit itself to Christian essentials *as professed and understood by the Church which is to use it*.

One result of the increasing theological and pastoral disorder in the Church of England is that the existing Church Catechism no longer exerts the influence that it once had. Few clergy now make Confirmation candidates learn it ; some have ceased to use it as a basis for catechetical instruction. Living amid these trends (which, no doubt, it is hoped that the production of the new Catechism will help to reverse), it is hard for us to realize how significant and influential in a church's life a properly ordered catechumenate is. It has often been remarked how the Westminster Shorter Catechism moulded the Scottish mind for more than two centuries. It was equally true, though in a less spectacular way, that the Prayer Book Catechism was a decisive influence in forming Anglican minds till very recently. In reality, a properly ordered catechumenate is an institution of enormous influence, for it decisively shapes the outlook of the rising generation. Rome knows the value of catechizing the young ; it is to be wished that Anglicans generally could re-learn the lesson. An ineffective catechumenate produces an ignorant laity, as we have learned to our cost during the past fifty years. The re-invigorating of the catechumenate is one of the most urgent needs in the Church of England today.

The mark of a properly ordered catechumenate in any church is that in it the contents of that Church's Catechism are faithfully and thoroughly taught. A Church's Catechism is its official manual of instruction for those who would become adult communicants. As such, it has a confessional significance. It has the status of what the Church of Scotland calls a " subordinate standard " ; that is, it is a normative exposition of the faith of the church that uses it second only in authority to that Church's Creed, or Confession. It is thus a foundational document in any Church's life. It is, or should be, the basic form in

which the growing child meets that Church's faith. The doctrinal importance of the Catechism is well brought out in the following quotation from *Principles of Prayer Book Revision* :

Changes in the Catechism are of considerable moment for two reasons : *first*, because it provides the priest with a syllabus of what he is required to teach candidates for Confirmation, whether children or adults, and, though he may supplement the syllabus, he cannot omit anything which it contains ; *secondly*, because it can be appealed to as an authoritative interpretation of the faith of the Church (p. 59).

It is clear, then, that a Church's Catechism is a document of major importance. It is clear, too, that the effect of altering a Church's Catechism will be (assuming that its catechumenate is well ordered) to alter its faith within a couple of generations. What you strike out of the Catechism, you absolve the clergy from teaching and the laity from learning. When you add fresh matter to the Catechism, you thereby charge the clergy to present it, and the laity to receive it, as vital to the health and safety of the Christian soul. The Catechism must not therefore, be changed irresponsibly ; changes in the Catechism have the most far-reaching consequences. For the Catechism is, for teaching purposes, the archetypal, fundamental, and normative presentation of the Church's faith.

* * * *

But if this is true, three things clearly follow.

First, it follows that the teaching of any Church's Catechism must be wholly in line with the teaching of its official confession of faith, and of any other subordinate standards that it may have ; otherwise the effect of the Catechism will be to throw that Church into disorder on the theological level.

Second, it follows that any Church's Catechism must command the assent of that Church as a whole, and especially of the clergy as a whole ; otherwise it will not be regularly and universally used, and that Church will, in consequence, be thrown into disorder on the pastoral level.

Third, it follows that the contents of a Church's Catechism must not be made a party issue. The essentials which the Catechism contains must be essentials agreed upon by all parties. There is no place in the Catechism for unrepresentative minority views or party lines ; otherwise the Catechism, instead of standing as an agreed platform of Church teaching, becomes itself a bone of contention and a cause of further division within the Church.

Now, therefore, we can see why it is simply impossible to revise the Catechism satisfactorily with the Church of England in its present state. In the first place, there is not sufficient agreement about Christian essentials. Those who hold that a particular doctrine of the Church, and of its ministers and ministrations, is part of the Gospel, would think the Prayer Book Catechism defective for not covering these topics, and would not be content with any Catechism that did not deal with them. Those, however, who take a different view would object on principle to the inclusion of much that the former group would think indispensable, and would object in detail to much that the

former group would want said on these themes. Then, in the second place, there is not sufficient contentment with, and loyalty to, the doctrine defined in the Articles, embodied in the Prayer Book, and expounded in the Homilies, concerning grace, the Church, the ministry, and the sacraments. Some would demand that any new Catechism move away from this doctrine; indeed, the hope of moving away from it all along the line is a main reason why some are pressing for Prayer Book revision at the present time. Others, however, would argue, on grounds equally of truth, of principle, and of expediency, that it would be disastrous for the Church of England to authorize any forms of worship or instruction which cut loose from the historic Anglican position, and would demand that all Prayer Book revision be confessionally controlled, lest the Church of England condemn itself to a life of everlasting theological schizophrenia. With minds in the Church of England thus divided, it is clearly impossible for a new Catechism that will give general satisfaction to be produced at present. However much or little approval the existing Prayer Book Catechism commands, it seems certain that any new Catechism will command less. And a Catechism that has not gained the approval of the whole Church would be, as we saw, a liability, not an asset, in the Church's life.

What, then, could the Commission of revisers hope to do? No doubt the divisions of opinion noticed above were reflected among its own members, so that they could not have agreed on a material principle for determining what should not go in, however hard they may have tried. What they evidently did—and with great skill and fairness; the chairmanship must have been masterly—was to pin their faith to the compromise formula and the principle of something for everybody: something about personal faith and the Bible for the Evangelicals, and something about the five non-dominical “sacraments” (here called “ministries of grace”) for the Anglo-Catholics. We do not blame them; we do not see what else they could have done. The result, however, is a document that at certain points is out of step with the Articles, the Prayer Book, the Homilies, and the central Anglican theological tradition. Though groomed like a pedigree product, it is a mongrel catechism, and we think it unlikely that a single member of the Commission, let alone anyone else in the Church, is entirely pleased with it.

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But it is time now to look at the revisers' work in detail.

The Prayer Book Catechism deals with the Baptismal Covenant, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Christian Sacraments, and contains twenty-five questions and answers. The Revised Catechism is about twice as long, and contains sixty questions, set out under the following heads: I. The Call of God: The Christian Answer (1-4); II. Christian Belief (5-10); III. The Church and Ministry (11-19); IV. Christian Obedience (20-24); V. The Holy Spirit in the Church (25-55), subdivided into: Grace (25-26), Worship and Prayer (27-30), the Bible (31-33), the Gospel Sacraments and other Ministries of Grace (34-55); VI. The Christian Hope.

Of the new material, some is excellent. There are clear statements

on the work of Christ as Saviour and Sin-Bearer, Advocate, Intercessor, and coming Judge (9). There is a whole new section on His personal return, the resurrection of the body, and the final judgment. (It is true that these things are already contained in the Creed, but it is good to see them drawn out in careful catechetical statement. The faith of young Anglicans, and older ones too, would benefit from some eschatological stiffening.) Again, the Revised Catechism speaks explicitly of the outgoing of personal faith towards Christ, in self-commitment to Him as Saviour and Lord (4, 41, 44, 50). It gives a positive formulation of Christian assurance, based directly upon Rom. viii. 38f. and I John iii. 2 (60). It specifies the essence of Christian worship as glorifying the Triune Creator and Redeemer (10b), and gives good general definitions of worship and prayer (27-29). It speaks clearly of the work of the Holy Spirit, both in common grace and in all communications of saving grace (25). The Spirit, we are told, is the inspirer, authenticator, and interpreter of Holy Scripture (32-33), and the giver of spiritual life (10). It is He Who sets the Church apart for God (13) and who transforms its members into the likeness of Christ (10, 60). (The Prayer Book word "sanctifieth" is dropped, but the idea is adequately expressed in these three answers.) Also, the new Catechism contains good, clear, theologically satisfying statements on the Bible (31-33)—though the sufficiency and supreme authority of Holy Scripture are not, alas, asserted—and on the four creedal notes of the Church. All this matter is consonant with biblical teaching, integral to the Gospel message, and authentically Anglican, and would add a considerable enrichment to the Catechism that we have at present.

The same can hardly be said, however, of all the new matter on the Church, the Ministry, the Gospel Sacraments, and the "other Ministries of Grace". Some of this is seriously objectionable. The main points perhaps are these :

(i) The answer to question II ("What is the Church?") begins : "The Church is the whole people of God worshipping him in heaven and earth." That is good. But the answer goes on : "It (the Church) is the Body of Christ through which he continues his reconciling work among men." That is not so good. It would certainly be appropriate to have here a sentence which said that the Church on earth is a fellowship that witnesses to Christ and fights evil, as well as worshipping God. Perhaps that is what this sentence means ; but it is curiously inept, for : (1) It speaks of Christ as continuing his reconciling work in the present, whereas when the New Testament speaks of His "reconciling work", whether of man to man or of men to God, it identifies that work with the achievement of Calvary, and insists that it was finished on the Cross (see Eph. ii. 14-16 ; Col. i. 19-22 ; Rom. v. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 18f.). If, as we suppose, the intended reference here is to evangelism, and the thought is of Christ drawing sinners to Himself and hence into fellowship with each other, "continues his reconciling work among men" is hardly, by biblical standards, a proper phrase in which to speak of this. (2) The metaphor that is here chosen, out of the many that the New Testament provides, to describe the Church, is peculiarly unsuitable when the thought is of evangelism. As Ernest Best has pointed out, the "body of Christ" metaphor "looks inward and not

outward ; it is used, not to express a truth about the place of the Church in the world, but about the relationships of members of the Church of Christ to Christ and to one another ; it is concerned, not with the external life of the Church but with its internal life " (*One Body in Christ*, 1955, p. 113).

There are, of course, those who regard the Church as Christ's body, not metaphorically, but metaphysically and ontologically, and see it as an extension of the Incarnation, and would not think any description of the Church complete in which the phrase " body of Christ " did not occur ; and no doubt the sentence under consideration was framed thus, with biblical language used in this oddly unbiblical way, in order to leave it open to such persons to expound what is said, not of evangelism, whereby Christ calls men out of the world to Himself, but of the Church as supernaturalizing society, or as linking men to Christ through its sacraments, or else of Christ as in some sense continuing His work of redemption by endlessly offering Himself to God in organic union with His members. But all these are minority views in the Church of England, of dubious biblical credentials, and scarcely a century old ; they can hardly be said to be rooted in Anglican tradition, and they are certainly not countenanced in any official formulary of the Church of England. As such, they have surely no right thus to deflect the wording of the Catechism from the biblical norm of usage.

(ii) The section (14-17) introduced by the question : " What orders of ministries are there in the Church ? " ought to be dropped. In the first place, the question presumably refers to the Church universal on earth, but it is answered by a description of bishops, priests, and deacons, and their work in the Church of England. This is odd : is the Church of England, then, to be identified with the Church universal ? And furthermore : it is essential for the catechumen to be instructed in the precise functions of bishops, priests, and deacons in the Church of England set-up before he be admitted to the Lord's Table ? Such instruction could only be held essential if this organizational structure were itself essential to the being of the Church, as such, so that where this threefold ministry could not be recognized the Church must be judged non-existent, and the conclusion drawn that there are no valid or efficacious Eucharists there. Knowledge about the threefold ministry would then be " saving knowledge " in the strict sense, for valid sacraments are generally necessary to salvation ; but is this the historic Anglican view ? Can it be proved by Scripture, which " containeth all things necessary to salvation " ? The answer is no in both cases. It is true that a vocal minority in the Church of England today holds this opinion in some form, but it does not seem right to give space in the Revised Catechism to a matter whose presence there could only be justified if this minority view were accepted as being Scriptural and normatively Anglican.

This section leaves the impression that the ministry is the Church for all practical purposes, and this impression is strengthened when, at a later stage, we read that " the Church's ministry in marriage is to *bless* the man and the woman in their wedding, so that they may together receive the grace of God . . . " (53). Certainly not ! This is Roman doctrine, not the doctrine of the Church of England. The Church is the

fellowship of the faithful, not just the minister; and the *Church's* ministry in marriage is to *pray for and with* the marrying couple—a ministry of which the officiant's pronouncement of blessing is only one small part. Here, too, a change of wording is imperative; unless, indeed, question 53 be deleted altogether, which we ourselves would favour (see below).

(iii) Baptism is defined (38) as "the sacrament in which, through the action of the Holy Spirit, we are christened or made Christ's". This definition is not very satisfactory. In the first place, it has no clear meaning (which fact alone makes it unfit to stand in a catechism). In the second place, it most naturally implies that there is a peculiar grace received in baptism *ex opere operato*. But it is not historic Anglican teaching (think of the Gorham judgment), nor, we think, is it unanimous present-day Anglican opinion, that the grace exhibited in baptism is always received in the rite itself, and never before or after. In the answer to question 42, however, we are told that "Confirmation is the ministry by which, through prayer with the laying on of hands by the bishop, the Holy Spirit is *received to complete what he began in baptism . . .*"; which form of words (based, it seems, on the audacious assertion in the Scottish Prayer Book that "Confirmation is an apostolic and sacramental rite by which the Holy Spirit is given to complete our baptism") seems to force us to interpret answer 38 of some sort of baptismal regeneration. Yet it is a very odd sort of regeneration, for it is only a partial initiation into Christ and His Church, needing the further grace given in Confirmation (also *ex opere operato*?) to perfect it. Such a concept has breath-taking implications. It implies that every baptized Christian throughout the universal Church whose ecclesiastical system does not make available to him episcopal confirmation misses some grace, forfeits some blessing, foregoes some degree of union with Christ. On this view, as Professor G. W. H. Lampe has pointed out, "Christian Baptism would be reduced to the level of the baptism of John, a preparatory cleansing in expectation of a future baptism with Holy Spirit; Confirmation would become, not merely a sacrament in the fullest sense (which the Anglican Articles deny), but the great sacrament without whose reception no man could call himself a Christian . . ." (*The Seal of the Spirit*, 1951, p. xiii). Lampe calls these "monstrous conclusions". We agree. Are they historic Anglican teaching? Can they be proved by Scripture? Again, the answer in both cases is no. We know, certainly, that this view (the "Mason-Dix line") has been argued at various times during the past hundred years by a small band of very able men, that it has a certain following today, and that it has actually been embodied in the proposed new Confirmation rite. But most Anglicans, we think, still hold to the historic view expressed in the structure of the 1662 Confirmation service—namely, that Confirmation is simply a domestic institution whereby the Anglican community, acting through the bishop as its appointed representative, welcomes into adult fellowship, on the basis of a personal profession of faith, those who in baptism were originally received, normally as infants, with the status of sponsored members. The congregation prays that the Spirit may strengthen the confirmees for the new responsibilities which their increased status in

the Church brings. But this is not in the least to imply that in the sight of God the blessings of the Spirit which their baptism signified—"union with Christ in his death and resurrection, the forgiveness of sins, and a new birth into God's family, the Church" (40)—are necessarily incomplete till Confirmation has taken place. Here again, then, we must protest against the intrusion into the new Catechism, which the whole Church, it is hoped, will use, of a minority opinion which most Anglican clergy in their teaching of Confirmation candidates would wish to ignore, or indeed repudiate.

(iv) At this point, however, we would make a more radical criticism. The passages dealing with the five "other Ministries of Grace" ("confirmation, holy order, holy matrimony, the ministry of absolution, and the ministry of healing") ought, we suggest, to be dropped entirely. For the assumption behind the phrase "other Ministries of Grace" evidently is that in each of these five cases (though, one would gather, in no other case) the activity of the officiant confers some special gift of God which would not otherwise be received. We saw earlier how clearly this comes out in the tell-tale wording of the statement about matrimony; and the assumption appears again when absolution is defined as the ministry whereby penitents who have made "free confession" of their sins in the minister's presence "receive *through him* (*sic*) the forgiveness of God". (This, of course, as it stands, is simply not historic Anglican teaching, but a well-known party line. To express the Anglican view of absolution, as witnessed to by the Prayer Book, the last words would have to read: "receive *through him assurance of* the forgiveness of God"—rather a different thing.)

But the assumption that these five types of ministerial action each convey a special grace *ex opere operato* is without warrant in Anglican theology—not to mention the Bible! We might, perhaps, be told that no such assumption is implied, and all that "ministries of grace" means in this context is that God blesses His faithful people through each of these ministerial functions. This is an undoubted truth; but if nothing more than this is intended, we should at once have to ask why, in that case, only these five receive mention? Why is healing specified when the visitation of the sick is not? Why is absolution spoken of while the preaching of the Word is left out? Whichever way we look at it, neither the Articles, nor the Prayer Book, nor the Bible, can justify the selection of just these five activities, and no more, as the Church's "other ministries of grace". The selection is inherently arbitrary and untheological. This idea behind it is presumably that the catechism ought to mention one ministerial action in the Church of England to correspond with each of Rome's seven sacraments; but there is no obvious reason why it should. The habit of mind which takes its cue from Rome and aims to keep step with Rome wherever possible is found in the Church of England, but it is not authentically Anglican. We ask again: can it be held that the knowledge of these five "ministries of grace" is in any way essential to salvation? Can the things that are said, in particular, about Confirmation, and matrimony, and absolution, be proved from Scripture? Can any warrant or sanction for them be found in existing Anglican formu-

laries, or in the main stream of the Anglican theological tradition? If not (and we think that the answer to all three questions is no), then they can have no rightful place in a Catechism for the Church of England.

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So much for the new material. But to complete our survey we should also note what has been omitted of the old material. Here are the more important deletions.

(i) The reference to the world, the flesh, and the devil in the first baptismal vow has been replaced by a weak general reference to "wrong" and "evil". (We gather, however, that the devil, at least, is soon to be restored to his rightful place as an object of specific renunciation.)

(ii) The assertion of original sin ("being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath") has been dropped entirely. This is disturbing, for the new Catechism now says nothing positive at all about man's lost condition by nature. It is true that the biblical doctrine of original sin (under its ecclesiastical name of Augustinianism) is having a raw deal in Anglican liturgical circles these days; but it is there in the Bible, and it ought to appear in an unexpurgated form in the Catechism. For the Catechism exists to teach the Gospel of God's grace, and you cannot understand grace till you have first understood sin.

(iii) The sanction of the second commandment has also gone, so that the new Catechism now contains no mention of God's penal wrath against sin.

(iv) The description of the Church as God's "elect people"—the covenant community—has gone. The thought of the covenant relationship seems to be completely absent from the wording of the Revised Catechism.

(v) The conception of a sacrament as a visible word of God, summoning its recipients to "Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament", has vanished too.

(vi) So has the demand that those who come to the Lord's Supper should first examine themselves.

Whether these omissions are just oversights, or whether the Commission judged these items to be unnecessary for catechetical instruction in the twentieth century, we do not know. To our mind, however, it would be necessary to restore them before the Revised Catechism was fit for use.

It is not easy to predict what the fate of this document will be. It may well be torn apart, as Prayer Book churchmen press for the restoring of omitted doctrines and the deleting of some of the new matter and Anglo-Catholics contend (as doubtless they will) for a yet more overt restoration of the seven sacraments. Perhaps this would be the best thing to happen to it; for, while it will win deserved admiration for the skill with which it is put together, it will not give unqualified satisfaction to anyone as it stands, and it would not be a gain to have authorized for use in the Church a Catechism with which nobody is quite happy. Were it amended at the points specified in this article, it

might satisfy others beside the present writer, but it would scarcely win the consent of the whole Church. And that is the crucial problem. We need desperately a revived catechumenate ; we could do with an enlarged Catechism ; but until the present-day Church has regained more of a common mind on doctrine, and come more thoroughly to terms with its own confessional position, there is no hope of any new Catechism commanding the general approval that it must have if it is to do its proper work, and not make confusion worse confounded. We cannot, therefore, imagine that the Revised Catechism has much future before it. Nonetheless, we would unstintedly "honour the Light Brigade"—Dr. Coggan and his men—for making such a gallant, if unavailing, charge.

Book Reviews

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE — NEW TESTAMENT

*(Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press.)
Library edition, 21s. Popular edition, 8s. 6d.*

It is a measure of the achievement of the translators of 1611 and their predecessors whose work they utilized, especially Tyndale's, that to most English people the King James Version is "the Bible". Even today, in spite of what he may learn about the origin of the Bible, the ordinary man tends to believe, almost unconsciously, that the words of the Authorized Version are the very words spoken by the prophets and apostles and by Jesus Himself; so that any new version seems to him to be an attempt to "tamper with the Bible". It is also a measure of the danger which must result when a particular version comes to be treated as sacrosanct that ordinary people, who believe that Jesus spoke in Jacobean English, do not, for the most part, read His words. The language of the Authorized Version has ceased to be generally understood, and if we were to cling to that version in public worship and for private reading, we should before long be reversing the policy of the Reformers. The aim of Tyndale and the other pioneers of the English Bible would be frustrated, for the Bible would become once again, after more than four hundred years, a closed book to the common people.

The New English Bible is the most notable of all the modern attempts to break through the barrier of language which makes countless people, among them professing Christians, treat the forbiddingly bound black volume with outward respect, but rarely, if ever, open it. It is outstanding, partly because of the nature of the Joint Committee responsible for the work, which was appointed by the main non-Roman Churches in England and Scotland, and partly because of the new approach to the problem of translating the New Testament which it represents.

Since the Revised Version appeared in 1881, much progress has been made in textual criticism. As the translators tell us, "there is not at the present time any critical text which would command the same degree of general acceptance as the Revisers' text did in its day. Nor has the time come, in the judgment of competent scholars, to construct such a text, since new material constantly comes to light, and the debate continues". Accordingly, the translators have examined each major variant on its merits, printing in the margin any important reading which has not been adopted. The Revised Version was much too conservative in its treatment of textual variants, with the result that the margin of that version often proves more valuable to the student of the Bible than the text as printed. The new translators have gone much further in improving the text. Among the changes of importance are the adoption of the "Western non-interpolations"

in Luke xxiv, the rendering of Mark i. 41 by "in warm indignation Jesus stretched out his hand", the adoption of "Doberian" as the description of Gaius in Acts xx. 4, as against "Derbaean" (all of which will probably command the support of the majority of scholars), and, a more controversial decision, the preference for the "shorter text" in Luke xxii. 19-21. Although there is very good reason for the last of these decisions, the fact that many present-day critics support Jeremias in his defence of the "longer text" might perhaps suggest that the wiser course would have been to print the longer text in brackets, with the shorter in the margin.

The main interest of the new Bible, however, lies in the translation rather than the eclectic text. The translators have abandoned the Revisers' policy of adhering as closely as possible to the A.V. and therefore of reproducing the non-English idiom of the latter. They have eschewed the connecting particles linking main sentences together, which gave a tone of artificiality to the A.V. and R.V. They have discarded the principle that a single Greek word ought always to be represented by the same word in English (thereby going back to the methods of 1611), and they have tried to render the meaning of sentences as a whole rather than simply to find an English equivalent for every Greek word irrespective of the context.

A translation of the Bible has one primary object: to make the meaning of the writers clear to people of a different language and different ways of thinking. In this first respect the task of the translators of the Scriptures is no different from that of the translator of the classics. There is, however, in his case an important secondary duty; he must produce a version which conveys especially in public reading, something of that sense of the numinous which befits the medium of God's Word to men. Those whose Bible has been the King James Version have been accustomed to associate the Scriptures with beauty and majesty of diction and rhythm. In so far as these qualities can be reproduced in modern English, the translator must seek to recapture them in the more intelligible language of the twentieth century.

The new version succeeds admirably in achieving the former aim. Amid the various complaints and fault-finding which this translation has already evoked it is well to remember with thankfulness that it will be the means of opening the Scriptures to very many people to whom they have been a closed book; and it must not be forgotten that those who really know and love the Authorized Version are in a tiny minority. Some of those who have been most vocal in attacking the new translation because of its inferiority to the King James Version probably know little of the latter beyond what they hear read on Sundays.

The ordinary reader can follow the argument of the Pauline Epistles; this is an enormous gain. Such difficult chapters as Rom. iii-v, or Gal. iii, are now intelligible. Some of the more familiar, but hard, passages such as I Cor. xv, stand out clearly. The Bible becomes an inviting rather than a forbidding book for private reading. In many places misleading translation has been corrected. Gal. iv. 6 becomes: "To prove that you are sons, God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son": an important change. Lesser improvements include

Eph. vi. 15, "Let the shoes on your feet be the gospel of peace", and Luke xv. 13, "the younger son turned the whole of his share into cash". Rom. v. 1, with its well-known textual difficulty, is well rendered, "let us continue at peace with God".

Some renderings are much more controversial. It is very possible that to translate the Pauline *sarx* by "lower nature" may suggest a misleading idea of the meaning. "Partner" in I Cor. vii. 36-38 fails to clarify that obscure passage, though the marginal alternatives help considerably. The translation of *hilasmos* in I John ii. 2 by "the remedy for the defilement of our sins" will provoke controversy; in Rom. iii. 25 *hilasterion* becomes "means of expiating sin". If there is to be paraphrase anywhere, it is perhaps a pity that "undergirding" the ship remains without any explanatory expansion.

Most reviewers have found the English style pedestrian. This is the fault of twentieth century language rather than of the translators; but it is most unfortunate that many passages read like a commercial document, even though the translators might reply that in fact they are only reproducing the original quality of *koine* Greek. There are many excellent passages, capturing the spirit of the original most convincingly: the "shop steward's speech" of Demetrius is already famous; the narrative of the shipwreck is generally good. On the whole, however, this version is deficient in the qualities which go to make up the "numinous", and this deficiency is serious in some of the great passages of the earlier versions: I Cor. xiii fails to stand out as at all distinctive; the Beatitudes give the original sense much more correctly but they are stilted. Sometimes the new version does not even succeed in writing twentieth-century English: "robbers" and "villainy" belongs to the stage rather than to ordinary speech, "proffer" is scarcely a natural word, and the words of the Annunciation, "Greetings, most favoured one;" belong nowhere in the twentieth century but to pantomime.

This is an admirable version for the private reader. Not for the schoolboy looking for a crib to the original, nor even for the serious student who would want to know that "one to plead our cause" in I John represents the same word as "advocate" in the Fourth Gospel (a footnote, "literally 'we have an advocate'" does not appear in the popular edition), but for the general reader. It is not mere obscurantism which looks for something less pedestrian in the Bible as publicly read in solemn worship.

G. W. H. LAMPE.

THE BIBLE IN THE MAKING.

By Geddes MacGregor. (John Murray). 310 pp. 30s.

The title of this book suggests a study of the Canon of Holy Scripture. This, however, is only part—and the least satisfactory part, at that—of the author's purpose. The meat of the book is a survey of the main translations of the Bible into English. It is when the author departs from this task, and ventures into the realms of either canonicity or theology, that his work is both less useful and more questionable. However, having committed himself to a study of "the Bible in the

making", he could not but start with chapters dealing with the composition and growth of the Old and New Testament Canons. It is not an encouraging start to find the typical Wellhausen view of the Old Testament stated as a dogmatic certainty. With the same absence of argument and assumption of the infallibility of the consensus of scholars, the multiple authorship of Isaiah is proclaimed. And all this is married to most questionable statements of Old Testament history and doctrine. The Exodus took place when "one of these captive Hebrews raised a rebellion" and "the Hebrews made a desperate bid for freedom" (p. 11). Is the author basing his remarks on the book of Exodus or on private tradition?

However, when he traverses the biblical ground, and enters upon the study of the history of translation, Dr. MacGregor provides an enthralling story. Starting with the handing down of the Bible in the early centuries, we are conducted through "a thousand years till printing" and so to the remarkable sequence of English Bibles. The Authorized Version gets largest treatment and is the author's greatest contribution. There is a fascinating study of the personality of King James about whom "English historians have generally complained that he never understood the English. But perhaps this is too much to expect. . . . If James . . . had really understood the English, he would have been a god rather than a man. He certainly was not a god. Perhaps he was not even very much of a man" (p. 106). We are entertained to thumb-nail sketches of the translators of the Authorised Version. One wonders if some modern advocates of this version realize how "Anglican" was its scholarship—mostly bishops into the bargain. Or that it was greeted on publication with the same vilification from some as their successors bestowed on the Revised Standard Version. The Revised Version is treated more briefly, and the comment on it is more stereotyped. Modern Roman Catholic versions are surveyed also, with astonishingly small attention to Knox. The book ends with chapters on the progress and difficulties of translation in our own day, and eleven appendices of which "The Roman Catholic Church and the Bible in Western Europe today" contributed by E. H. Robertson is the most interesting. The book, of course, was published before the advent of the New English Bible, which, therefore, is only referred to as in process of translation.

J. A. MOTYER

OXFORDSHIRE CLERGY, 1777-1869: A STUDY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH AND THE ROLE OF ITS CLERGY IN LOCAL SOCIETY.

By *Diana McClatchey*. (Oxford University Press.) 252 pp. 45s.

Based largely on a thorough sifting of diocesan records of the nine episcopates from Butler to Wilberforce (wherein Bagot is seen to stand out as preparing the way for the reforms of the last of these bishops) this book is a weighty contribution to the history of the Church of England during a period when, irrespective of theological opinions, great administrative changes affecting parochial life were slowly being made. Mrs. McClatchey has confined her study to the county of

Oxfordshire (but excluding the city of Oxford), which until 1836 was coterminous with the diocese. She devotes the first part of her book to *Ecclesiastical Oxfordshire*, with illuminating chapters on patronage, poor livings, parsonage houses, non-residence, pluralities, and stipendiary curates. The evidence clearly shows that the contemporary, widespread forms of non-residence and pluralism arose more from the circumstances of the time—the poverty of many livings, the frequent lack of parsonage houses with no prospect of help in financing their erection—than from the greed of clerical careerists, of whom a few examples only can be cited. Some of the details of the notorious *Black Book* of 1820 are subjected to a timely scrutiny and its generalizations incidentally shown to include generous degrees of misinterpretation of the facts.

This is a book for the specialist. Though it is full of interesting observations, there are too many names without faces for the general reader, and the more companionable *Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Country Parson* of Dr. Tindal Hart, together with Kilvert's *Diary* (just outside the period), should be read in conjunction with it. Part II treats the (mainly) country parson as pastor, landowner, charity trustee, educator, promoter of health, magistrate, and an influence in politics. Here it is only possible to remark on the striking part played by clergy in the earlier growth of such institutions as the Radcliffe Infirmary and the asylum founded at Headington by the Rev. Dr. Warneford which now bears his name. Each of these chapters will amply repay careful study, showing as they do a far-reaching impact made on secular life by a broad understanding of clerical obligations. This at once made it easier and more difficult for the parsons to speak to the laity as man to man.

Mrs. McClatchey's grasp of the relevance of detail can only inspire admiration. In very few places is there room for any criticism on the ground of factual omission or error. It would have been of interest to have added as a motive for pluralism that of evangelicals like Thomas Tyndale, rector of Holton, near Oxford, 1819-1856, who explained to his curate, Alexander Dallas (founder of the Irish Church Missions, whose activities in his subsequent curacy at Burford Mrs. McClatchey may be said to note with approval) that he only retained his living of Wooburn in Buckinghamshire "to keep the truth of the Gospel in the parish." Lack of reference to other works in the same field is sometimes noticeable, for example, in the valuable appendices of pluralists, where, in the case of incumbents with a second benefice in Northamptonshire, the numerous volumes of Isham Longden's *Northamptonshire and Rutland Clergy* could hardly have been referred to without fruit. On page 62, Dr. Foulkes was rector of Besselsleigh until 1857, not 1859; on page 87 (note 2) Dr. Cleaver was principal, not president, of Brasenose; and on page 248 (index) "the Rev. John Lenthal" was not a clergyman.

Mrs. McClatchey has dealt objectively with a period of English church history which has been misunderstood as much by evangelicals as by others and her scholarship has been used to the great advantage of future historians of the established church.

J. S. REYNOLDS.

INFANT BAPTISM IN THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES.

By Joachim Jeremias. (S.C.M.) 112 pp. 12s. 6d.

The precision of Professor Jeremias's scholarship is well to the fore in this new volume, which, admirably translated by David Cairns, is a distinguished addition to the S.C.M. Press's Library of History and Doctrine. The evidence set forth, accumulated from "a thorough examination of all the sources", points strongly to the baptism of the infant children of Christian parents as normal during the first four centuries of the Church. With reference to the New Testament situation, Dr. Jeremias rightly points out that it was a missionary situation in which the original converts, being adults, were also the first to be baptized. The question is whether their children were also baptized. We are advised, very properly, that "if we wish to understand biblical texts rightly, we must radically free ourselves from modern individualistic thinking", and that "Paul and Luke could, under no circumstances, have applied the *oikos* formula, if they had wished to say that only adults had been baptized". "Theologically," says Dr. Jeremias, "the establishment of the fact that children were baptized as members of a family joining the church is of fundamental significance. The children were not regarded by the primitive church as isolated units."

A close examination of the facts known to us concerning Jewish proselyte baptism reveals a "multiplicity of contacts with primitive Christian baptism", which lead to "the only possible conclusion", namely, that they were related as parent and child. The significance of New Testament passages such as Col. ii. 11, Acts ii. 38, xi. 14, xvi. 15, 33, xviii. 8, I Cor. i. 16, vii. 14 (though Dr. Jeremias decides that this verse "bears no reference to baptism", significance though it may bear by implication), Acts xxi. 21, and Mark x. 13-16 is carefully sifted. The case made out by Professor Jeremias from the New Testament is certainly impressive and full of interest, though at certain points he seems to be in danger of overstating it.

The available evidence for the centuries immediately succeeding the apostolic age, from inscriptions as well as literary sources, is also examined and is found to present a uniform picture up until the beginning of the fourth century. With the popularization of Christianity, however, consequent upon the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, a new situation becomes apparent: for the first time evidence appears of the postponement by Christian parents of their children's baptism—a consequence of the teaching that baptism (which was equated with cleansing by the blood of Christ) availed only for the cleansing of previously committed sin, but not for the cleansing of sins committed thereafter. This pernicious doctrine can be traced back (though Dr. Jeremias does not do so) at least to early in the third century. None the less, it is apparent that the custom of baptizing infants remained the norm. The crisis posed by this "magical misunderstanding of baptism" passed with the rise of Augustine and his era.

The justification of infant baptism must rest upon theological principles which are consistently scriptural. But the collateral, though subordinate, significance of the archeological testimony of the early

centuries must not be underrated. This erudite monograph is an important contribution in the latter field. It has been excellently produced by the publishers.

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

LITURGY AND SOCIETY

By A. G. Hebert. (Faber.) 260 pp. 8s. 6d.

This is not a book about the Liturgical Movement as such, though there are many useful references to it. Dr. Hebert tells us in his preface that when he started to write, he meant to relate Christian dogma to worship, but found that the subject would not allow itself to be limited to a purely religious and ecclesiastical treatment. The reader will be thankful for this, since he has the double benefit of the views of an eminent scholar upon the philosophical and social questions of the day as well as those church affairs with a survey of the practical problems posed by liturgical development thrown in.

It is interesting to read of Dr. Hebert's emancipation from that Liberal theology which has done so much to undermine the faith of some and to bewilder the minds of others. Such views come in for strong criticism, but it is always with a constructive aim. "The way out from liberalism is not backwards but forwards." Whether the way chosen by Hebert and his followers is always the right one is for the reader to decide. For one of them at least it would seem to lead from man-made humanistic theory to man-made authoritarianism based upon strange interpretations of Scripture.

There runs throughout this book a curious but not uncommon misconception of Evangelical teaching. One is tempted at times to feel that it is very convenient for the Anglo-Catholic to set up as an Aunt Sally the Evangelical insistence upon the subjective and individual nature of conversion, so that he may proceed to knock it down with his own notions of salvation through Church and sacrament. Do intelligent people really think that Evangelicals leave the newly converted in a spiritual vacuum? Are we thought to know so little Scripture that we never teach the importance of fellowship and service? Church history since the Evangelical Revival contains sufficient answer. Moreover, it has often been so sadly true that church membership and sacramental teaching have gone hand in hand with a complete lack of that personal holiness which is the mark of a real spiritual experience.

As one would expect, there is a good deal in this book about "eucharistic sacrifice". Every opportunity is taken nowadays of mentioning this word and underlining the contention that the 1662 service is patient of an interpretation conveying the idea of "offering up the body of Jesus in the Sacrament". Dr. Herbert believes that the "Parish Eucharist" at 9.30 a.m. should be the main service in every church, with the whole worship focussed upon the Lord's Supper interpreted in that way. The sermons, we are told, should be specially adapted, for not all are suitable for the "Parish Eucharist". It must not be hortatory, nor devotional, but rather should "give expression to the common faith of Christians". What would be the effect of

years of such teaching and preaching? Surely a travesty of that vital faith set forth in Scripture as the product of the true preaching of the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

JOHN GOSS.

THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK.

By G. D. Yarnold. (O.U.P.) 119 pp. 10s. 6d.

Consider the following: "The Bible nowhere takes the view that God requires the suffering and death of a sacrificial victim. Such a view is wholly alien to the Biblical revelation of the character of God. Even in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament the death of the victim is incidental to the offering of the *life* to Almighty God . . . Christ's sufferings and death are not in themselves the sacrifice to which the Christian Church looks for its redemption . . . The sacrifice to which the Church looks for its redemption is the entering of the Risen and Ascended Christ into the heavenly places; there to present himself, and mankind in him, before the Father. We are redeemed by the interceding presence of the Ascended Christ in heaven, rather than strictly by the death on Calvary" (pp. 97f.).

Is that so? This is the basic question which Dr. Yarnold's readers must ask themselves, for these words express the basic thesis of his book. The author claims that he finds this conception exhibited in Hebrews, and he founds his whole exposition of the Lord's Supper upon it. "What is done in each Eucharist," he writes, "which the Church celebrates on earth derives its meaning from the . . . eternal (i.e., in this context, endless, continuous) self-offering of Christ at the heavenly altar" (p. 3). The present reviewer is probably not the only one who will wish to argue in reply that Hebrews does not teach this doctrine; that Dr. Yarnold's view of the significance of blood-sacrifice in the Bible is mistaken; and that to identify Christ's redeeming sacrifice with His heavenly intercession, and to reduce Calvary to a mere preparation for the offering of that sacrifice, is to turn the New Testament Gospel upside-down.

The book is able, and there are good things in it, notably the exposition of John vi, where Dr. Yarnold correctly treats our Lord's sermon not as a eucharistic discourse, but as a discourse about that which the Lord's Supper is also about—namely, faith in Himself. Dr. Yarnold has evidently aimed to offer a representative statement of the way in which modern Anglo-Catholicism (biblical and neo-Thomist, rather than medieval or idealist) understands the Lord's Supper. He has not, therefore, tried to break new ground, but confines himself to standard points (including some standard Anglo-Catholic mistakes about Protestantism—for example, that those who do not hold the pipe-line theory of bishops and orders believe that the local congregation delegates ministerial authority, and that Article XXXI was not meant to condemn the Roman Mass as such). Dr. Yarnold desires to transcend polemics, and to stress the given unity of all Christians in Christ, the unity to which the Lord's Supper bears witness; but this unhappily does not stop him from bowling the Anglo-Catholic googly (out of the back of the hand, going the wrong way) and debarring intercommunion without episcopacy. On this issue, as on the real presence and the

eucharistic sacrifice, on both of which Dr. Yarnold attempts an eirenical outflanking movement, controversy will have to go on. One hopes, however, that future combatants will all keep as calm, charitable, and close to the Church's heartbeat as Dr. Yarnold himself has sought to do.

J. I. PACKER.

ETHICS AND THE GOSPEL.

By T. W. Manson. (S.C.M.) 109 pp. 12s. 6d.

This is in one sense a slight book, but in another sense not; for nothing that the late Professor Manson wrote was ever really slight. He was a shrewd, vigorous, independent, exact scholar, richly endowed with that genius which manifests itself in taking pains, and mature erudition wedded to ripe judgment marked all his work. Biblical scholarship lost much by his death in 1958.

What we have here is a set of six lectures, originally the Ayer Lectures given at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in 1953, partly revised by the author and now prepared for the press by Ronald Preston. They explore some of the basic perspectives of biblical ethics. The first crystallizes the character of Old Testament ethics, as the code of the covenant. The second, "Judaism and the law of Moses", passes in review the noble moralizing of the rabbis. The third analyses the Sermon on the Mount, in order to show in what sense our Lord understood and endorsed Old Testament morality. The fourth shows how the distinctive character of Christ's ethical teaching springs from His demand that Christians should "follow" Him. This chapter is thin and incomplete as a treatment of its subject; it reads like half a set of notes with vital pages lacking. We can only regret that the author did not live to prepare it for the press himself. The fifth chapter exhibits the extent of the ethical concern of the primitive Church, as seen in the Acts of the Apostles. The sixth suggests how the early Church applied to itself Christ's demand for identification with His own self-giving, saving ministry. This lecture is the least satisfying—indeed, it is maddening; for Dr. Manson, following in the footsteps of Dodd and Jeremias, expounds *ex cathedra*, without argument, a whole-hogging form-critical view of how the Church adapted and reapplied to itself parabolic utterances of our Lord which were originally spoken with quite a different meaning from that which the Church gave them, and such a view is no less arbitrary when Dr. Manson expounds it than it is in the hands of anyone else.

As a study of ethical perspectives in the Bible, the book is not complete (nothing, for instance, is said about the Pauline ethic of the man in Christ, dead to sin and risen to righteousness). Yet much of what is here is valuable, if not new, and nobody could read it without becoming a wiser man. Valuable as it is, however, 1½d. a page, or ½d. per hundred words, seems rather a lot to have to pay for it.

J. I. PACKER.

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF JUDGMENT.

By Leon Morris. (Tyndale Press.) 72 pp. 5s.

This is an expanded form of the Tyndale Biblical Theology Lecture of 1960 by the newly appointed Warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge.

Dr. Morris, with all his customary lexical skill, first traces the use of the word *shaphat* in the Old Testament and finds that it signifies dynamic right-doing. The judgment of Yahweh is a blend of law and love and it is inevitably a process that sifts men. Because of this it is creative of the beloved community. The ultimate emphasis of this word and of the others, with which he deals more briefly, is the eschatological judgment of the day of the Lord. On the basis of this word-study which occupies just over half the monograph, he then expounds the New Testament doctrine.

Judgment in the New Testament is a present reality both by the Father and by Christ. The very offer of salvation is divisive. But Dr. Morris comes down heavily upon those who will have only a realized eschatology. With careful exegesis of the Scriptures and telling quotations from modern writers he shows that a final judgment is reasonable, moral, and inevitable. "A purely 'realized' eschatology is calamitous alike in its failure to reckon with the message of the New Testament, and in its tragic consequences." While not going into the problem of eternal punishment, the author stresses the reality of hell as a necessary corollary to the reality of love. While believers may have confidence in the day of judgment because their salvation depends upon Christ, nevertheless their reward will depend upon their works and there can be no cause for complacency. There will be much in the judgment that will be quite unexpected.

Altogether this is a most valuable study which leaves the reviewer with the wish that Dr. Morris might write a full-scale book on the subject. It would meet a crying need.

R. E. NIXON

LE MILIEU DIVIN : AN ESSAY ON THE INTERIOR LIFE.

By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. (Collins.) 160 pp. 18s.

That the Jesuit philosopher Teilhard de Chardin was a thinker of unusual capacity has already been made apparent to the English speaking world by the publication of a translation of his book *The Phenomenon of Man* in which he developed his concept of man as being in process of evolving into a new species whose prototype has been disclosed in the event of the Incarnation. The present volume propounds the mystical theory by which de Chardin sought to govern his living. His concept is of God revealing Himself everywhere as a universal *milieu* because He is at the same time "the ultimate point upon which all realities converge". His mystical aim is that of assimilation into this *milieu*, and this end is achieved in *unitate corporis Christi*—by participating in "the omnipresence of christification". The stages by which this mystical union is realized are, first, the "divinization" of our activities, each one labouring, in his daily work "to build the Pleroma" with the aid of the "sur-animating" power of God; and, second, by the divinization of our passivities, whether of growth and life, or of ill fortune, disability, old age, and, ultimately death, which is "the sum and consummation of all our diminishments".

Matter is conceived of as holy and having a spiritual power, not as a weight that drags us down, but as "the slope on which we can go up

just as well as go down". There is a "general 'drift' of matter towards spirit", and "the soul can only rejoin God after having traversed a *specific path* through matter". It is evident that de Chardin, though avoiding the stark dualism of the Pythagorean mysticism of the ancient world, has not in fact succeeded in shaking himself free from its governing concept: his involvement with the earth is still in order to "draw from it the strength to escape from it".

Linked with his idea of the evolutionary christification of the created order is his sacramental doctrine that "the eucharistic transformation goes beyond and completes the transubstantiation of the bread on the altar", that "step by step it irresistibly invades the universe", and that "in a secondary and generalized sense, but in a true sense, the sacramental Species are formed by the totality of the world, and the duration of the creation is the time needed for its consecration."

De Chardin's advocacy of his mystical doctrine is expressed with intensity and often with great beauty. But his philosophy of salvation is Greek rather than distinctively scriptural. The action of God's grace in Christ is from above down, not from below up, and it is focussed on Calvary rather than on Bethlehem, essential though the latter is to the former.

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

MAN AS CHURCHMAN.

By Norman Sykes. (Cambridge University Press.) 203 pp.
21s.

The announcement of the death of the Dean of Winchester came as a shock to many who judged that the fruits of his scholarship, which were being made available on a swelling tide of literary productivity, were very far from being exhausted. *Man as Churchman* is the last book to have come from his pen during his lifetime; but we may venture to hope that work which he had in hand at the time of his death may be published posthumously. The four chapters of the present volume comprise the Wiles Lectures delivered by Dr. Sykes in the Queen's University, Belfast, in May, 1959. In them he considers "some vital issues arising from (the) revival of interest in Church history during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries". The lectures bear the authentic stamp of the vigour and virtuosity of the mind of this notable historian of the Church. Particularly enlightening are his description and discussion of the debates on the Petrine Supremacy and on the authority of Scripture and Tradition which took place at the Council of Trent and at the Vatican Council. The historical evidence, so deftly presented, exposes not only the precariousness of the papal pretensions but also the strongly felt differences of opinion among the papal theologians themselves over these important issues—differences only to be stifled, not resolved, by authoritarian decrees of Pope and Church, as has also been the case in modern times over the most recent *ex cathedra* promulgation, in 1950, of the dogma of the Bodily Assumption of the Virgin Mary (to which Dr. Sykes devotes a few revealing pages). This is not a large volume, but its worth must not be judged by its size.

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

LITURGICAL VESTURE.

By Cyril E. Pocknee. (Mowbray.) 57 pp. 15s.

Those who desire a concise illustrated survey of the origins and development of the so-called eucharistic and liturgical vestments may find this nicely produced work of some use. The author expresses the hope that it may "contribute something towards dispelling the many misconceptions that still exist in regard to ecclesiastical costume and vesture". We can think of few things less related to the needs and realities of the contemporary situation, however, than the dressing up of the clergy in fancy garb such as this book describes. Mr. Pocknee's interpretation of the Ornaments Rubric in justification of the use of certain of these vestments, though current in Anglo-Catholic circles, is incorrect. So also is his declaration that "the study of comparative religion and the revival of biblical theology has shown that both medievalists and reformers alike misunderstood the nature of sacrifice and equated it solely with death or immolation". (He might, with advantage, study Dr. Francis Clark's recent book, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*, which will be noticed in the next issue of this journal.) And it is certainly not "the common consent throughout the whole of Christendom" that chasuble and albe are "the proper vesture for the Holy Communion", unless the author excludes from Christendom all the multitudes who do not consent to this view. Our Church today should consider rather whether it would not be wiser and more realistic to follow the example of the first centuries of the Christian era when, as Mr. Pocknee acknowledges, "there was no distinction between ecclesiastical and civil dress, just as no special or hieratic language was employed in the liturgy".

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

CONCERNING THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD.

By John Calvin. Translated with an Introduction by J. K. S. Reid. (James Clarke.) 191 pp. 17s. 6d.

In his own lifetime Calvin was called a Calvinist. The taunt grieved him, for he had striven above all else to be scriptural. Today the jibe has acquired a prefix, neo- or hyper-, but it is still the same accusation against the Reformation teaching on grace. As usual in such disputes, there is much ignorance and misunderstanding, and so we may be grateful to Professor Reid for giving a new and more readable translation of Calvin's work on Predestination. The subject was an integral part of his doctrine of grace.

The actual translation improves on its nineteenth century predecessor, even if we could have wished that the fine long Latin sentences had been more often broken down to the English norm. Calvin had earlier dealt with this subject in his *Institutes*, but in later years he had been accused of making God the author of evil. So, despite failing health, he penned a reply to his two opponents Pighius and Georgius the Sicilian. The present work is not easy to read just because so much of the argument is direct refutation of works we have never seen. Professor Reid helps us along with headings, and three excellent introductory sections where he gives the historical setting and analyses the argument. Calvin

is certainly not above critical scrutiny, but it only darkens counsel when we read in section 4 and 5 criticisms which amount to saying, "What a pity Calvin had not read his Barth." There is indeed a fine Christological strain in the Genevan's thinking, but it must not be so exalted as to upset his profound Trinitarian balance.

It is true Calvin draws heavily on Augustine, but above all he seeks to be biblical. His doctrine is no remnant of the Stoicism which attracted him in his youth, nor is it an academic theory. It is biblical, practical, and directly relevant to preaching. Romans ix-xi is not the only passage he examines; he searches through Paul, Peter, and John to show that his doctrine of grace is squarely that of the Bible. "I should never have spoken on this subject, unless the Word of God had led the way" (p. 61).

There are those today who fear the pastoral consequences of predestination. They will find Calvin deals with them. It did not stop him preaching the Gospel to all the world, and further he used the doctrine to drive indolence out of the faithful. Again the doctrine of predestination is a great comfort to the Christian who lacks assurance. He may know that his salvation depends on God and God alone, for it was the Father who chose and predestined him in Christ. Those who dislike Calvin's doctrine must prove from Scripture that they have a better doctrine of grace. If they can do this, Calvin would be the first to agree with them.

G. E. DUFFIELD.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY.

By William Cunningham. (The Banner of Truth Trust.) 2 vols. 639 pp. and 614 pp. 30s.

William Cunningham was the sternest and most dogmatic of the Disruption leaders and the last of the systematic theologians. As Professor at the New College, Edinburgh, (and later Principal) he taught Church History by means of lectures dealing with the issues raised in heresies. Hence his method was controversial and all the great doctrines of Christianity are handled in that spirit. His knowledge of the subject was vast and his intellect sharp. His trenchant style is a sheer delight as the argument is unfolded step by step and the errors of the ages demolished by his skilful blows for the truth. As a mental discipline the work is most rewarding. The three main alternatives to the Reformed Faith are handled incisively—Romanism, Socinianism, and Arminianism. Herein is both the strength and weakness of the Reformed position.

So far as book values go the two volumes are beautifully prepared and at reasonable cost. Iain Murray, the editor, is to be congratulated on an excellent introduction covering the lives of William Cunningham and James Bannerman and the events leading up to the Disruption of 1843. One regrets that the work has not been severely edited in the interests of modern readers. The pith of the subject could have been condensed, without serious loss, to 300 pages. Some of the sections should have been brought up to date, as the chapter which deals with the Epistles of Ignatius and the rise of the ministry in the Early Church.

What is contained here is irrelevant in view of further study into the debated question.

The work originally was posthumous, based on unrevised lecture notes, and the third edition was last published ninety years ago. The style belongs to that period. The purpose behind the present reprint is definitely polemical and aimed at purging evangelical circles of certain limitations.

R. E. HIGGINSON

ANDREW A. BONAR : DIARY AND LIFE.

Edited by Marjory Bonar. (Banner of Truth Trust.) 535 pp. 12s. 6d.

Andrew Bonar, most famous of a band of brothers, Scottish Free Churchmen in the nineteenth century, is among the writers most recently brought back to public attention by the praiseworthy labours of the Banner of Truth Trust. This volume, produced by offset litho-process, is incomparable for quality of production at so low a price.

Bonar's life (1810-1892) is a kind of history in little of the Scottish Church in the nineteenth century. He was profoundly influenced by Thomas Chalmers, he admired Irving for a time, he followed his master Chalmers at the Disruption in 1843 into the Free Church, he was closely associated with the Moody and Sankey visits in 1859 and 1873, he was Free Church Moderator in 1878, and, above all, he was a faithful, devout, unremittingly energetic evangelical Christian of a fine nineteenth century kind.

There is much in the history of the period which we would like to know more about, but which this book does not provide. Some of its references are obscure. The Reminiscences by the editor at the end might have supplied these deficiencies. In fact, these reminiscences are rather scrappy and ill-organized. The new introduction is likewise inadequate and there is no index.

Much the best part of the book is the Diary itself, with its witness to an intense Bible-centred faith. Bonar's allegiance was sublime. He rejoiced in blessing, and found cause for joy in suffering. His looking forward to the happiness in the presence of God that is given to His saints after death is a particularly insistent note in this book. To us (and especially at a cover-to-cover reading) some of this may appear rather monotonously emphasized, and at times one suspects a kind of hot-house intensity about it, but there can be no mistaking the deep-rooted assurance and joy of one who was much used in God's work.

ARTHUR POLLARD.

THE MINISTER'S DEVOTIONS.

By C. R. Walker. (St. Andrew Press.) 128 pp. 20s.

BAY WINDOWS INTO ETERNITY.

By A. Graham Ikin. (Allen & Unwin.) 135 pp. 15s.

These two books on prayer and devotion are very different in approach and content. Mr. Walker's book is based on retreat addresses given in Scotland and is directed all the way through to giving specific

guidance by way of practical suggestion on the pitfalls and problems attaching to the private prayer life of the ministry. He is well aware of the invasion, by many duties, into the time that should be set apart for communion with God, and also of the easy rationalizations that appear to put casual prayer-life upon a high spiritual plane. There is both ready sympathy with the question of family demands beside those of the parish, with an insistence upon regular prayer time that will take every care to preserve it. Mr. Walker's suggestions on the subject of aids in devotion both as to books of prayer and on such matters as posture are by no means limited to one church tradition, certainly not just that of the Church of Scotland; he devotes three chapters to these topics. There are valuable counsels for country clergy with their especial temptations in mind; and two unusual chapters on holiday devotion and prayer in retirement strike out on a fresh path of helpful counsel.

In Miss Ikin's book one turns from the concrete to the more abstract. She writes in a mystico-psychological strain, influenced by the writings of the late H. T. Hamblin and the *Science of Thought Review* in which Christian devotion is interpreted in terms of Jungian insights. The analogies and phrases drawn from normal experience hardly lead to the answers that a biblically based spirituality seeks from this rather vague but confident religiosity. Despite the Christian terms which appear, there is lacking a whole dimension of redemption from sin in New Testament terms. Rather "The Christ-consciousness is the true secret place of the Most High. It is the place wherein the divine spark in man that makes him truly human becomes aware of its source in the God and Father of us all"; hence "the higher sanity . . . looks for the fulfilment of the present potentialities by an influx from the dimension of the spirit". With this approach, despite the recommendations printed at the beginning and the presence of helpful suggestions through the book it cannot have unqualified approval, by any means, as a spiritual guide.

G. J. C. MARCHANT.

PROSPECT FOR METAPHYSICS: ESSAYS OF METAPHYSICAL SPECULATION.

Edited by Ian Ramsey. (Allen & Unwin.) 240 pp. 25s.

This book consists of twelve papers which were read at a gathering of philosophers at Downside Abbey. They are intended for the professional reader, or, at least, for the well-informed layman, but though some are technical and compressed others have a wider range and should be of interest to any religious thinker. The book gathers momentum as it goes. The first three papers tick over a little uncertainly. Then, by climbing on some distinguished philosophical backs—Plato's for assistance, Russell's and Ayer's with daggers drawn—the middle group of essays advances forcefully. Finally, the last three, longer, essays soar into the metaphysical heights and try to bring down some constructive ideas.

Over the past decade we have become accustomed to the revival of metaphysics. The blows dealt to it by the logical positivists and the Oxford school of linguistic philosophers have proved after all not to be

death-blows. On the contrary, the central principle of positivism as formulated by the Vienna Circle—the famous verification principle—has itself been attacked with such penetration that it is now generally regarded either as a piece of metaphysics or, in places where such vocabulary is not admissible, at least as a pointer to the inadequacy of pure empiricism.

But, granted the chinks in the positivist armour, has the metaphysician anything of value to offer us? These papers hardly add up to a convincing case. They show that some metaphysical philosophers have learnt clarity, which is a substantial advance. But while the clarity with which they handle their opponents' arguments is commendable and at points compelling it becomes a double-edged weapon: it reveals all too clearly the bareness of their own cupboard. Dr. C. F. C. Daly, whose essay is perhaps the best in the book, is at pains to work out what might be called a logic of metaphysics, but his brilliant analyses seem to leave little room for a metaphysical contribution to human knowledge. In escaping from the suggestion that metaphysics is concerned with something "beyond" experience or language he ends up rather lamely in the cul-de-sac that "there is something in ordinary language which is not 'ordinary' and not expressible in empirical terms".

The contributors, it appears, all write as Christians. Though by no means all are Roman Catholics, the majority approach philosophy through the medium of natural theology. The theme that belief is essentially rational is recurrent. In the one essay in which he is mentioned Karl Barth evidently inspires the writer (Mr. Howard Rood) with a feeling approaching horror; and in an essay on "Platonism" Professor Armstrong, in his fear of the idea that God is arbitrary, goes so far as to imply that He is subject to moral standards, that is, to such standards as human reason constructs. (Surely the answer to the threat of "potentia absoluta" is not to provide a strait-jacket for God but to maintain an indissoluble link between God's sovereignty and His love.) It is understandable that starting from these premisses the writers view with distaste attempts made by Christian philosophers to use positivist tools and to argue that religious assertions are logically different from "factual" assertions. Credit is given to Mr. Alasdair MacIntyre for his work in this field, but it is evident that his idea of "commitment" as the basis of "religious logic" is unacceptable with its existentialist, not to say Protestant, overtones.

Yet one may well feel that the proper function of a Christian philosopher at this time is to pursue the paths that are being mapped out by Mr. MacIntyre and others. Metaphysics, in its traditional sense of striving to propound and answer the ultimate questions about God and existence, seems to many a Protestant mind to be hard to reconcile with biblical truth. The biblical approach, as seen especially in St. Paul's First Corinthian Epistle, is to regard the ultimate questions as answered only by divine revelation, to which a response of the will, rather than of the unaided mind, is required. This is the source, and this the status, of the assertions of Christianity. What the philosopher can do is to examine their logic and seek to correlate them with assertions used in the discourses of science, ethics, aesthetics, and so forth. He can do

this only in a spirit of humility, knowing that his treatment of them has a limited validity and can be regarded as clarifying only one aspect of their "meaning". But in so far as he brings clarity he does a service—and a better service than can ever be performed by a philosophy that is based upon natural theology, Christian platonism, and other such foundations. For all the interest of this book and its undeniable brilliance in places, metaphysics remains, for one Christian reader at least, a fascinating but a useless chimera.

DEREK TAYLOR THOMPSON.

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE STUDIES: A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE
CECILIA M. ADY.

Edited by E. F. Jacob. (Faber.) 507 pp. 63s.

Only students of history will appreciate the value of this remarkable book. Fifteen essays by distinguished contributors like Sir Maurice Bowra, E. Gombrich, and John Sparrow, are introduced by an assessment of Renaissance studies by Dr. E. F. Jacob (Chichele Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford) and the volume is fitly terminated by a biographical note (and sketch drawing) of Miss Ady by John Hale. Forty illustrations add to the value of the work and illuminate the contents admirably.

Miss C. M. Ady was a devout churchwomen of moderate Anglo-Catholic sympathies as one would expect in a Renaissance historian. She was one of the earliest members of the House of Laity.

It is fitting that her valuable studies in the Renaissance period should be commemorated by such a volume as the one under review. Her chief interest lay in the signorial families of fifteenth century Italy, their influence upon the city states, and their impact upon the civilization of the times. These essays, therefore, are devoted to the elucidation of that theme and treat the leading families like the Medici, Sforza, and the Malatesta. Finance, art, politics, songs of dance and carnival, and astrology, are all handled with care and detail as illustrating the character of the movement, as well as the major issues of Italian humanism and its impact on barbarian Europe. Particular attention is paid to the effect of war as a means of extending the sphere in which ideas operate. The Papacy also comes under review.

The changed attitude toward the Renaissance is skilfully outlined by the editor. During the last fifty years notable changes have taken place and the era is no longer treated as it was. A new periodization has begun as scholars have ceased to restrict their vision to the confines of Italy alone, and have depaganized the movement by showing it to be a continuation of medieval ideas and their moralization. The medieval period was not static nor even slow-moving in the realm of politics and ideas. Students of humanism now point out the significant overlapping of medieval and Renaissance elements in the upsurge of the new movement in the spheres of art, literature, and philosophy. The concept of a sudden awakening of the human spirit and the magic flowering of personality at a distinct point in European civilization has given way to the idea of a deeply rooted movement

emerging from the Latin past. It is true the leaders in the different fields were creative artists, especially the poets. Certain men stand out above the rest. The break with the past is seen more clearly in the commercial and political life of Italy. Local independence and piecemeal development were achieved through the initiative of the merchant princes and despots. In the realm of thought the renewed interest in history proved most fruitful in the stimulation of the human mind, quite as effective as philosophy. Classical archaeology became the main feature of study in the Italian academies and the past was rescued from oblivion with great enthusiasm. As Leonardo da Vinci notes: "Thou, O God, dost sell us all good things at the price of labour". The merits of this book cannot, however, be adequately assessed in such a brief review.

R. E. HIGGINSON.

DAILY LIFE IN FLORENCE IN THE TIME OF THE MEDICI.

By J. Lucas-Dubreton, translated by A. Lytton Sells. (Allen & Unwin.) 324 pp. 30s.

This is a welcome addition to the publisher's Daily Life series. The author knows his subject well and gives a vivid picture of the variegated life, manners, customs, events, and personalities of fifteenth century Florence. No city of this or probably of any other period was more colourful. If there is a deficiency, it is in the knowledge and appreciation of the great intellectual and literary figures of the period. But perhaps only a typical "universal" scholar of the type that flourished in the Florentine quattrocento could satisfactorily have delineated all the perspectives of this truly remarkable city-state, which was once became the home not only of Medicis like Cosimo and Lorenzo the Magnificent but also of Gemistos Plethon, Ficino, Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola, Savonarola, Botticelli, Giotto, Da Vinci, Donatello, Cellini, Michelangelo, and many other notable men.

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS.

By R. K. Harrison. (English Universities Press.) 160 pp. 7s. 6d.

It was unfortunate that two of the best known producers of paperbacks should have published, a few years ago, studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls that were misleadingly partisan. So it is specially pleasing that the *Teach Yourself Books*, with their wide circulation, have done something to redress the balance with this eminently sane and responsible account. The story of the discoveries is well told, and the factual details of the MSS well marshalled; but the crucial matter in such a book is the assessment of the Scrolls' significance, and here lies its chief merit. Professor Harrison discusses the information yielded by this material on the text of the Old Testament, and sects of Judaism, and the apostolic age, with scrupulous fairness and a steady regard for the fact that many of the questions under debate remain open for lack of decisive evidence. It is a clear and honest survey, well deserving the comment by Dr. William Neil at the close of his introduction: "Most readers will . . . feel that as a concise guide to the scrolls for the unprofessional student this book could not be bettered".

F. D. KIDNER.